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Society and Babe Robinson

:: or ::

The Streets of Old San Francisco

A Play

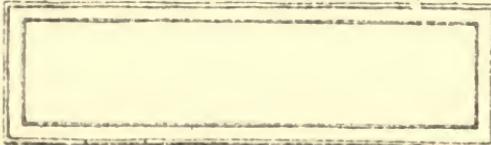
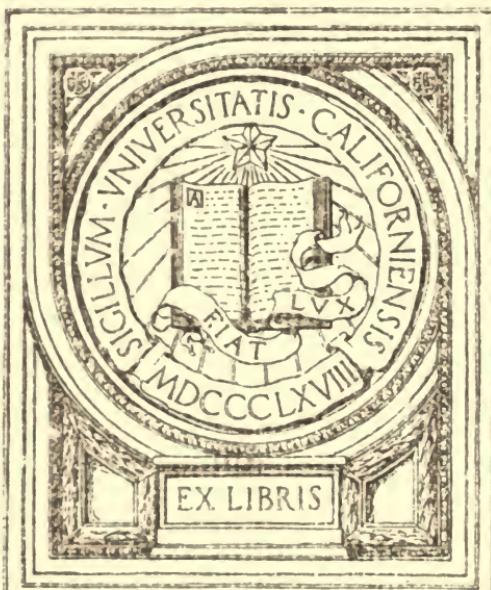


*"Shall a celestial spark be quenched in the dark
and an angel be bartered for gold?"*

By ELLA STERLING MIGHELS
(Born Clark)

Author of "The Full Glory of Diantha," "The Story of the Files of California," "Little Mountain Princess," etc.

GIFT OF



PRICE, \$1.00

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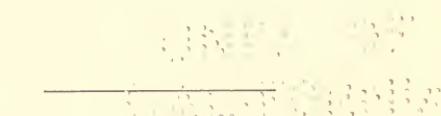
Society and Babe Robinson

or the

Streets of Old San Francisco

A Play

Containing also frontispiece, "Where Babe Met Morton Again;" Introduction, Biographical sketch and portrait of author, and a "Word to the Reader."



Pacific Publication Company,
88 First Street, San Francisco.
1914.

To Mr. S. Hartman, of Merced

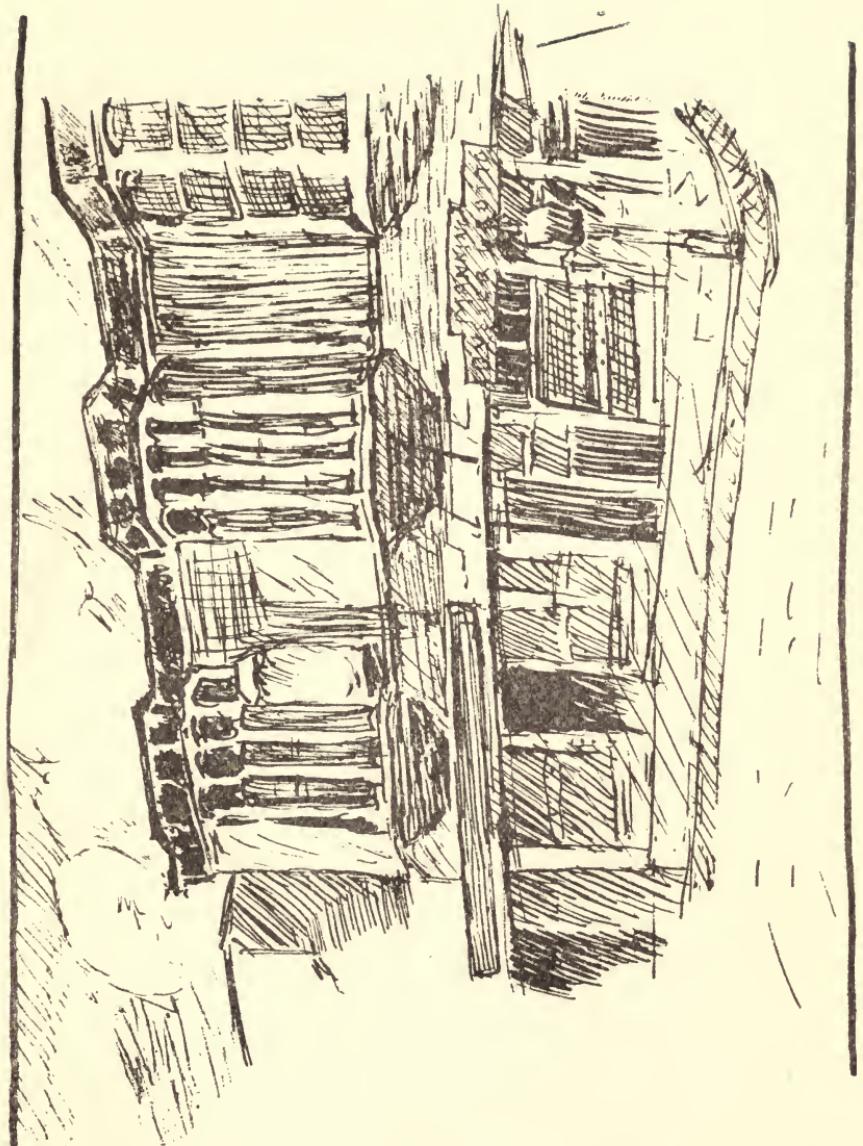
An early Californian, a faithful American and a true friend of long acquaintance who has always encouraged me in my work from my youth up till now.

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Ella Sterling Mighels.

Copied from the "Annals of the Bohemian Club."



Pine street between Kearny and Montgomery, location of Bohemian Club, Bowen's Grocery Store, and Manning's Oyster Grotto. Act II, Scene 1. Where Babe meets Morton again.

INTRODUCTION

This play of "Society and Babe Robinson or the Streets of old San Francisco," by Ella Sterling Mighels, a daughter of the Golden West, will appeal to all classes, the rich and the poor alike, at home and abroad. And in book form it will make a unique addition to collections of "California." The first and the second acts of the play were written as a short story, and it was read in public at an entertainment given for the benefit of the "San Francisco Girls' Union," the first non-sectarian attempt made for the helping of working-girls in our city. This was given at Irving Hall on Post street, near Kearny, on Tuesday evening, June 9th, 1885.

The author was applauded to the echo. Not only that, she was also urged to turn her chapters into a serial for the "San Franciscan," but that weekly journal had passed away before the tale was completed. Always she met someone on the street who stopped to ask about "poor little Babe Robinson," as if the child were a living, breathing human entity. Wherever she went, Babe Robinson walked by her side, entreating companionship. And so grew the complex situation copied from the life of the city of that day, interwoven with the types familiar to our streets. Each one of these types is modeled from a real human being of that time.

The story from which this play has been dramatized was written under the influence of the undying melodramas of that period, "The Two Orphans," "The Lights of London," "The Shadows of a Great City" and "Romany Rye." For the sensational tale of "Society and Babe Robinson" has the streets of old San Francisco for a background, as the others have Paris, London and New York for theirs.

Thus it is that that old time has been thus preserved for those of future generations, to reveal to them what is lost now and gone forever, as if it were a happening of only yesterday.

The two lines used on the cover to express the spirit of the drama were written by a poet of the early days who died in the mines of mountain-fever, while still a youth. The other lines used elsewhere were written by the author of the play.

Owing to the romantic life-story of the author of this original drama, without which as a background, doubtless "Society and Babe Robinson" would never have come into being, it has seemed only a natural thing that it should be told here in the form of a biographical sketch.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR

By SARAH CONNELL

The birthplace of Mrs. Ella Sterling Mighels was in Sacramento county, in the mines near Sonoma[?] where James Marshall found the first piece of gold. She is the posthumous daughter of the late Sterling B. F. Clark of Rutland, Vermont. He had crossed the plains early in 1849 and had settled at Mormon Island in the midst of the first "gold-diggings" in the state. Soon after arriving he was recognized for his ability, and as "Alcalde Clark" he presided over a rough court-of-justice such as prevailed in those times. Every turn of his hand brought him good fortune, so that in three years he owned not only flume and water-rights but also a hotel and other property, as well as land in San José and Sacramento.

It was not strange under these favorable circumstances that he should decide to return to the Eastern States via Panama and marry the "girl he had left behind him" in Pennsylvania, and fetch his young bride to the home he hoped to establish. Upon his arrival in California for the second time, returning to San Francisco by ship, he arose early, went on shore and returned with the fruits of the season to display to his young bride. He was stricken suddenly with symptoms resembling cholera and was carried upon a stretcher to the old Rassette House on Bush street, attended by his wife, "a stranger in a strange land." There two weeks later he died, at the age of twenty-eight. His last words were these, "Dear Rachie, promise to keep me in the remembrance of the little one that is coming."

Mrs. Clark, a bride of three months, exchanged her bridal garb for deepest mourning. From the grave of her husband in Yerba Buena cemetery (where now cross McAllister and Polk streets), she went to Mormon Island where she entered into possession of the estate left to her. The judge of the probate-court made a special ruling to suit the circumstances of the case and set apart two-thirds of the estate as the separate property of the unborn child, including in this division, the land in Sacramento. (Upon this land today is located the Capitol and the governor's mansion at Sacramento.) So great was the interest of the entire community in the tragic bereavement of Mrs. Clark, that everybody sought to serve her. Never were women more devoted. Never was the innate chivalry of man more beautifully, more delicately revealed and portrayed. At that early time the children were running wild and among them, some big uncouth boys who did not know their letters at twelve years of age. A committee of men came one day to urge that Mrs. Clark should turn her little canvas house into a school for the sake of the community and the young. This she did, thus starting the first public school in that region, which was also a Sunday school for them all week long, where they learned morals and manners as well as books. She even taught them the stars. In after years bearded men sought her out in the Sierras to express their gratitude to her for the culture they had received in that little home-of-learning. This location is pointed out today by a landmark-sign placed upon a big tree beside the road, three miles from Folsom, on Hoxie's ranch.

Here, surrounded by the women and children, the young widow kept apart from the world, and in the following year, on May 5th, 1853, in this school-house was born the posthumous child of Sterling B. F. Clark. The miners who had been his friends and comrades, grieved sincerely over the plight of the fatherless babe. A deputation of stalwart citizens came with a gift of their own. They had brought her a gold-rocker to take the place of the traditional cradle, and each man took his turn in rocking and soothing her to sleep in this unique bed, with his own mother's lullabies upon his lips. In a measure it was as if they had adopted her, and so "Little Ella," as she was always known to them (even after she grew up), became the ward of the community, belonging to men and to women alike.

When the little girl was fourteen months old, there was a wedding in the canvas church, and Mrs. Clark was led to the altar by a man from Maine, Dudley Haines Haskell. As they walked down the aisle together, he stopped and claimed the child as well as the mother, saying: "I have my wife on this arm, now give me my child on the other." And the women were all weeping as he went forth with them both from the church-door to be always faithful to his trust to his last day on earth. So it came that the little girl had a particular father of her own even though all men were her fathers. And she also had brothers and sisters to whom she became a little mother of solicitude herself, and whom she loved with all the ardor of her nature.

Her mother never ceased telling her as soon as she could talk, of the message left to her from her own father, and impressing upon the childish mind that she herself belonged to California and California belonged to her more than any other child, historically, because of these circumstances peculiar to the early times. And especially because she had been cradled in the gold-rocker which had been taken from its use on the banks of the American river to serve her instead of washing gold. Always she repeated to the child the story of these stern strong men who forgot the gold in their desire to serve a child, and who were like fathers to her when she was a helpless little thing, and the mother urged upon the little girl never to forget them to her latest day.

Thus she grew up amongst the miners not only in Mormon Island but also in Esmeralda county in the Sierras, where again she met the same men, grown older, but still in pursuit of gold and silver. She was their pet and playfellow, and gathered an endless repertory of true stories to tell to future generations of the big, kind-hearted men and the consideration and indulgence they always showed to the young of early days. So it came to pass that Ella Sterling Clark grew up to womanhood believing in her destiny, that she was to be the connecting link between the old times and the new, and was to stand as witness of the splendid worth of these early men never chronicled by any of our historians.

Mrs. Mighels has been quite a traveler, having crossed the continent twelve times and the Isthmus of Panama twice. Born near the banks of the American, her first school days were passed within the sound of the waters of the floodtides of the restless Sacramento, but there are other memories. Before she was ten years old, she knew the Androscoggin in Maine and the "blue Juniata" in Pennsylvania.

She has walked beside the Hudson, the Thames and the Seine, as well as by the Shannon, which derived its name from some of her far-off ancestors on one side of the family. On the Clark side she counts her descent from New England colonists as far back as 1640. Rivers have left a deep impression on her memory, and she speaks, too, of the red rushing torrent of the Colorado, the majestic glory of the Columbia, the tossing current of the Kern, the beauties of the Merced, the weird sensation produced by gazing down from a mountain in Modoc county upon Goose Lake, the source of the Sacramento, and the sublimity of that frozen river, the Muir Glacier, upon which she has walked for miles.

Though never posed as an infant prodigy, Mrs. Mighels showed her literary proclivities very early in life. She began to write little stories when she was yet a child and she is still writing. "The Little Mountain Princess," a story of Lake Tahoe, the first novel written by a native Californian, published in 1881, was hers. After the death of her first husband, the late Adley H. Cummins, in 1889, she turned to the work of compiling and publishing "The Story of the Files of California," the standard, in fact, the only available source of information concerning the early literary history of the state. Later, another novel, "The Full Glory of Diantha," was published. Caspar, the virginal, elemental hero of the story was modeled from her own ideal of a man, Adley H. Cummins.

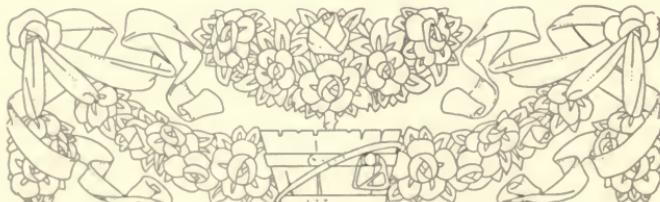
After an absence of sixteen years, twelve of which were spent in New York and four in London, Mrs. Mighels returned to California. Having lost her only child and her second husband by death, she is devoting herself to two objects, the completion of her own literary work, and the welfare of the children of her neighborhood.

Her home at 1605 Baker street, is a port of refuge and a center of culture for them. Irrespective of creed, class or country, they flock to "Aunt Ella." From the babies yet led by the hand to the youths and maidens on the threshold of the larger life, they come for amusement, advice or assistance in their school studies. "A Child's Library" without any of the restrictions of an institution is one of the features. Here there are the colored pictures and large print that are a joy to the youngest infants; fairy tales and children's classics, histories, biographies and the school-books of earlier days act as lure and stimulant. The standard good books which have stood the test of generations are available to the older lads and lasses, as well as the mothers and fathers. Various, but always advantageous, are the occupations which find interest. One may drop in upon the old-fashioned spelling-match, or it may be the enactment of a fairy story or a series of tableaux presenting patriotic and historical scenes and events or perhaps a recitation of poems. Mrs. Mighels is following the system established by her own mother away back in the fifties, before the school system was in practical working order, and churches, except in the larger settlements, were few and far between. While these little neighborhood boys and girls and their big sisters and brothers are apparently only having the best kind of a time, they are also learning moderation of speech, good language, good manners, good taste and an appreciation of all good things. They call themselves the "Ark-adian Brothers and Sisters of California," and the one rule they must observe is, "Thou shalt keep the peace."

Already these children have attracted attention in their classes at school as being brighter than their fellows, for Mrs. Mighels, like her mother, has also taught them the stars as well as books.

"Aunt Ella" believes that for the sake of Young Life we should lay stress, not on the evil which we do not wish to see propagated, but on the good we would see prosper. Her rule of guidance is not the negative but the affirmative, and the children learn to act not because "I didn't know it was wrong" but because "I knew it was right." Their motto is "Work for the right and fight for it." Her aim and object is to "KEEP THE INNOCENT INNOCENT," for the sake of the family, the state and society, as she was taught in her own childhood.

She urges a revival of the almost obsolete term, Friendship, to take the place of the misused and misapplied modern expression, Love. She maintains that Love is a house on fire, destructive while it lasts, but quickly dying down to leave only cold ashes, while Friendship is a controlled fire in an open grate, giving forth warmth and providing peace and comfort. All men and women should maintain towards each other the attitude of Brothers and Sisters, for the good of Society, and, as in the old fairy stories, there should be but one prince and one princess in each life; all others are wicked magicians and old witches. Children should be taught to be friendly with the neighbors, and neighbors should be friends to the children. Her interpretation of the old fairy myths is original—that the real fairies are the elderly folks who care more for children than they do about fashions, so they are always portrayed in rags. But when children are good and considerate the fairies are ready to wave the magic wand and transform everything in the twinkling of an eye, and if the children of today were polite and respectful to those whose heads are gray, both men and women, they, too, would meet fairies, for politeness invites the fairies while rudeness drives them away. In the play, "Society and Babe Robinson," founded partly on fact, she shows how a poor little girl, unfortunate and alone, without influence, succeeded in making good friends to come to her relief and bring her happiness.





Portrait of Author in her Pioneer Mother's
Wedding Shawl of 1852.

A WORD TO THE READER

This play is a dramatized version of an unpublished novel of the same name which has claimed my attention ever since 1885. It is now being published in book-form, not so much to display a knowledge of dramatic technique, as to reveal the workings of the human heart, of rougher human nature, and to picture the streets of old San Francisco briefly and with vividness. A good stage-manager may easily prepare this mental offspring of mine for stage-presentation, but doubtless he would make changes requiring someone to be "married off" in the last act. To my mind the conventional ending of a play, in wedding, divorce or death, does not seem to be the only one, although it does appeal to the average publisher and stage-manager.

I interpret the great "Book of Life" differently, and I believe that the general public is coming to read it according to the more natural way, too.

To survive is the first law of our nature. Therefore in "Society" you will find all, the high and the low, the rich as well as the poor, the parasites and the cravens, the innocent and the crafty, all waging war, one against the other, in the "Battle for Gain," which to some merely means "BREAD." In the midst of the struggle is the forlorn figure of a Babe Robinson, trying to pick up a crumb here and there.

What wonder, in the midst of the clashing and resounding of arms, that the still small voice of Duty is hushed by the clamorous cry of Self-Interest, and the child is crushed under foot? And yet, there is a holy fatherhood and a holy motherhood in human nature, which comes to the relief of the forlorn child and preserves her to the world. Paternal and maternal solicitude over the young being the highest and most thrilling exercise of human feeling, it cannot be crushed out. It survives in spite of everything as a saving grace to prevent this poor old world from rushing to its doom of extinction. It survives in the heart of a stage-driver, of a gambler, of a reporter, of an old maiden lady, of an old Irish woman, of a high-bred society dame, at the opportune moment to be exercised for the sake of a Babe Robinson. It was true then, away back in 1881 in our San Francisco. And it is true now in this year of 1914.

It is my desire to preserve the original story just as it is. It is my wish to maintain from first to last the simplicity and delicacy

of the suppressed tragedy revealed in the under-current of this play. It is my sincere belief that more tragic than the retribution of evil, more poignant than the remorse of the wrong-doer, are the trials of the innocent.

I take this stand: that whatever may be the status of a man, whatever of misfortune or even of evil that may have entered into his life, on one point he should be firm. As in the early days of our land, he should shine with a radiance like that of the angels guarding the young from harm, and strengthening them in their innocence. I insist that there is no duty, no obligation on earth which goes before PROTECTION OF YOUNG LIFE. And in the early days we had it. That is the message I bring to each one of you from the mining-times and from the miners themselves. They were my companions and playmates. They deplored their own lapses from grace, but entreated the children to be good, and nobly, generously, helped them to that which was good.

As these men went tramping from one mining-camp to another in quest of the ever-elusive gold and silver, these men fell into nameless graves. But I say to you that their message to you of today in this play of mine is worth more than jewels of pearls and diamonds: "Keep the innocent, innocent."

ELLA STERLING MIGHELS.
(Born Clark.)



Society and Babe Robinson

or the

Streets of Old San Francisco

In a Prologue and Five Acts

By

Ella Sterling Mighels

"Shall a celestial spark be quenched in the dark
And an angel be bartered for gold?"

(From Lyman Goodman, an early California poet.)

Time, 1879-'81. Placed in Nevada and in California.
Prologue. A stage-station in the wilds of Nevada. Parting of Babe
and Steve, the stage-driver.

"Move patiently on, O Earth,
Till patience no more can bear."
(Lapse of twenty-four hours.)

Act I. Scene 1. San Francisco, ferry-landing. Babe meets Belmour, the gambler, and Morton, the reporter. Scene 2. Babe falls under the spell of Mollie Darling. Scene 3. Babe runs to the arms of Sister Gertrude.

"Till Justice shall fly to the home of its birth
And justice on earth declare."
(Lapse of one year.)

Act II. Scene 1. Window of Manning's Oyster Grotto and outside of Bohemian Club, Art Association and California Market on Pine street, between Montgomery and Kearny. Babe meets Morton again. Scene 2. Inside of Grotto. Morton finds friends for Babe before he goes to write up the hanging.

"There are grains of gold in the darksome earth,
There are lustrous pearls in the deep, deep sea."
(Lapse of six months.)

Act III. Scene 1. Howard near Fifth street, rooming-house of poor people. Mrs. Spangler's home where Kate and Lily have taken Babe under their protection. Scene 2. Room inside of house. Scene 3. Hall outside of room. Morton listens to the fog-horn. Scene 4 (after the curtain has gone down and up again). Alley-way, Belmour's hiding place.

"And a mighty heart is beating still
Underneath the world's great misery."
(Lapse of six months.)

Act IV. Scene 1. Nob Hill, California street. Exterior of Miss Harrington's mansion. Scene 2. Interior of same. Wedding of Kate and Will Harrington. Babe's first appearance in Society. Babe gives her promise to Morton.

"Beneath the darkest cloud the silver gleams."
(Lapse of twelve hours.)

Act V. Scene 1. Room at Mrs. Spangler's house again. Mollie Darling seeks Babe. Babe breaks her promise. Morton turns from her. Scene 2. Belmour's hiding-place. Babe learns who it is that murdered Steve. Scene 3. At the dock of the China steamer. Babe forgives Belmour. Scene 4. End of dock. Babe is rescued. Miss Harrington is moved to compassion; orders her carriage to be brought and takes the child as a guest to her own home. One by one they all depart save one, the faithful Keyman, who stands gazing at the distant ship bound for China.

"In every soul there is a point that redeems."

PROLOGUE

STEVE, the stage-driver.

TOM, the other stage-driver.

TALL HIGHWAYMAN.

SHORT HIGHWAYMAN (addressed as "Bart").

PARSON HAGER.

BABE ROBINSON, fourteen years old, a waif from the mountains.

OTHER ACTS

JOSEPH MORTON, a reporter.

ROBERT BELMOUR, a gambler.

MR. MALONEY, a political boss.

PARSON HAGER, searching for his long-lost daughter.

MALCOLM STRONG, a young bookkeeper, brother of Kate.

WILL HARRINGTON, who is in love with Kate. He is the young half-brother of the wealthy society-woman, Miss Harrington, who frowns upon Kate.

JIM CASTLETON, a society man, in love with Lily White.

GEORGE FRENCH, a capper for gamblers, called "Frenchy."

{ ALFRED KERCHEVAL, the weakling son of a rich man in Sacramento.
BOBBY SPANGLER, son of an Irish mother and an English father, his mother, Mrs. Spangler, being now a widow.
HENRY SCHLOSSER, the keyman of San Francisco, a castaway of German type. (These three being hoodlums and friends.)

MURRAY, the butler at Miss Harrington's.

DR. KERCHEVAL of Sacramento.

BILLY BARNEY, a negro minstrel, out of a job.

NEIGHBOR O'NEIL, a wealthy working man.

EMPEROR NORTON, a character from the early days, always passing along the street in the parade of fashion, stopping to give the rosebud from his buttonhole to some pretty little girl.

BABE ROBINSON, the waif from the mountains, hoping to get work to do in the city.

MOLLIE DARLING, an adventuress, companion of Belmour.

MISS WIGGINS, a kind old school teacher.

SISTER GERTRUDE, a night-nurse of a semi-religious sisterhood.

KATE STRONG, land-office clerk, helping to get her brother through Heald's Business College.

LILY WHITE, a very beautiful girl, a sales-lady in a fashionable cloak store.

BUNNIE, the infant.

MRS. EMMONS, who adopts Bunnie.

MRS. RICHMOND, a very beautiful woman, owner of the Woman's Co-Operative Printing Company, with whom Babe finds congenial work to do, at four dollars a week.

MRS. SPANGLER, once Maggie Maginnis, the "queen of Antrim County," but now the landlady of a rooming-house for poor people, and the proud mother of Bobby Spangler.

MRS. BIDDY EGAN, the weird old sister of Mrs. Spangler, called "the bogie" by the roomers, a poor scrub woman with a big heart.

MRS. GUSSET, who lives in the basement, a poor widow who makes shirts for Beamish and Company to support herself and five children. Mrs. Gusset appears in the background apologetically trying to keep the children from annoying every one.

MINERVA, who plays with the Gussets.

SOCIETY PEOPLE

MISS HARRINGTON

{ who are trying to make a match between
young Harrington and one of the daughters
of Mrs. Castleton.

MRS. CASTLETON

MRS. MORTON, an Eastern woman.

LINA JENNY { younger daughters, who are merely in the background.

TWO YOUNG SOCIETY MEN, also in the background.

MEN, WOMEN, CHILDREN, DETECTIVES, DOCKMEN, WORKERS, etc.

PROLOGUE

SCENE. (*Stage station for changing horses near by but not in sight. Wild country of Nevada. Sagebrush. Morning light slowly unfolds from darkness into pink and purple. Hiding in the brush are two forms of men. They are disguised and wrapped in gunny-sacks with black masks obscuring their faces. A sound of distant wheels sounds faintly. Men arouse themselves. One creeps out from under cover and puts ear to the ground.*)

FIRST MAN: I hear it—it's the stage all right coming down. Now, Bart, you go up the road and be ready to stop the horses when it goes back, and (*grimly*) I'll hold up the driver and make him throw down the Wells Fargo! It's a big haul this time. Don't lose your nerve—keep cool.

BART. (*standing up as he starts to obey instructions, showing himself to be shorter than the first man*): Wish I was as cool as you. But this is my first time, you know. (*pantomime follows. They creep behind the brush and disappear.*)

Closer comes the clatter of wheels. Voices are heard calling and giving orders about the baggage. There is considerable bustle and noise as of trunks being transferred from one stage to the other.)

Voice of TOM, the other stagedriver: Wait a minute, Steve, I've got to tell you something.

STEVE (*coming in sight while speaking*): All right, Tom. Be ready in a minute. (*Steve is leading Babe by the hand. She clings to him and is weeping. He is a fine specimen of rugged manhood, with iron-gray touches in his hair and short beard. Babe is still childlike and simple in spite of her fourteen years, and is given to outbursts of feeling. She is dressed in an all-red outfit, merino frock and red-and-black plaid shawl; on her head is a man's hat of black felt, and it is tied under her chin with red ribbons. The hat has a way of slipping back and making a halo around her face. Her shawl is flying loose most of the time. Her short reddish-brown hair hangs in curling clusters about her face. In her hand she holds an old-fashioned carpet-sack with faded flowers on, showing that it is much the worse for wear.*) I've got to say good-bye to the little gal first. (*to Babe*) Now cheer up, for I'll be down there with you in a few days to look after ye and then we'll be goin' to the Cliff House (*crooning to divert her grief*), an' the theatre, an' to Woodward's Gardens. My, what a grand time we'll be havin'! No more sagebrush then an' alkali.

BABE (*sighing*): Yes, I know, but even a few days is a long time to be away from you.

STEVE (*objecting*): No, 'taint, any such thing! Only you've got to be keerful. By the way (*pauses, unbelts the revolver from his waist*) here (*impulsively*) take this!

BABE: What? Your six shooter? Won't you need it?

STEVE: Of course not, I've got another! (*Babe puts it in her satchel.*) Now, look-a-here, if any feller gets fresh, ye jest take it out—

kind o' keerless-like, but let him see y've got it, an' it'll set him to thinkin' thet ye ain't no slouch about lookin' out for yerself. Thet'll give him a good scare. (*pauses meditatively*) An' yet (*hits himself a blow over the heart*) d'ye know, Babe, I've half a notion to take you back with me again? It is such an awful big world down there at the Bay. And I'm gettin' scared for you, already!

BABE (*childishly*): Yes, I know, but it would be the same thing over again. The boys and girls would go on calling me names, for something I never did.

STEVE (*with a groan*): That's true. I'll have to let you go.

BABE (*questioningly*): But, Steve, I'd like to ask you a question: What's it all saddled on to me for? That's what I can't understand. Because my mother went—and married—the man—that killed my father (*pause*)—why should I be punished? I am innocent!

STEVE (*mildly*): Well, there is something in the Good Book about the innocent havin' to be punished for the guilty to the third and fourth generations. It is a kind of cast-iron rule of this yere airth that you can't do nothin' with.

BABE (*resentfully*): Well, I wish I had the makin' o' some of them cast-iron rules! I'd rub that one out, pretty quick.

STEVE (*pityingly*): Well, ye see, Babe, that was got up to make parents behave theirselves for the sake of the innocent, so's they'd be ashamed to do anything wrong.

BABE: Well, it didn't happen to work in my case, did it? (*meditates*). But you can bet that I'm never going to do anything that will make my poor little children ashamed of me. I'm going to "walk a chalk-line" through thick and thin for their sakes, just like I wish my mother had done for me.

STEVE (*seriously*): If there's any way to beat that rule, I'll bet that's it. You stick to that, Babe, an' you'll come out all right.

(*Clatter of hoofs is heard. Man on small black mule appears. It is Parson Hager.*)

STEVE: Hello, Parson! You're just in time to say good-bye to the little gal. She's on her way to San Francisco, in all her glory. (*Parson dismounts.*)

PARSON HAGER: Do you think it is safe to let her go to the great city all alone? (*meditatively*) I once knew of a girl who went to the city alone, and her father never saw her again.

BABE (*swinging her carpet-sack restlessly*): That's all settled. Parson. You know how everybody throws it up to me about my troubles, and, besides (*pulling up her sleeve*) see what my step-father did the other night, when he had been drinking. He threw something at me and cut my wrist. I don't want to go back. If I do, I'll run away and marry the first man that asks me, just to get away, for it's no home to me! I've promised Steve to be a good girl and "walk a chalk-line," and he'll be down in a few weeks to look out for me. So there!

STEVE (*meditating anxiously*): Yes, in a few weeks. Can't you ask a blessing for the little gal, to keep her safe? It might help!

PARSON HAGER (*with uplifted hands*): Father in Heaven, protect this child and keep her safe from harm. Amen! (*mounts his mule and goes.*)

TOM (*calling from within*): Hurry up, Steve, got to be on time! Don't forget the other stage has to connect with the cars at Reno.

STEVE (*holds her two hands*): Now, all right? Got your carpet-sack and your six-shooter?

(*Babe puts her hand into the satchel and takes pistol out with a flourish.*)

BABE (*confidently*): When I get below, I'll just belt it on and let everybody see that I can take care of myself, see if I don't!

(*Entrance of Tom, the other stagedriver.*)

TOM (*coming close to Steve and speaking confidentially, with his hand to his mouth, for secrecy*): Look out for the Wells-Fargo! Got a big treasure aboard this trip. 'Bout ten thousand, I guess.

STEVE (*laughing*): That's all right. Don't you worry about me, Tom, I ain't going to give it to the first feller that asks me for it, you can bet! (*turns to Babe*) Good-bye, little gal, just for a few weeks, till I can get down there. You stop at the Cosmopolitan till you find a nice lady to board with, and let me know, right away, for I'll be terrible lonesome, you know.

BABE (*hanging on to his coat-sleeve and burying her face against his arm*): Good-bye, Steve, good-bye. (*Bill grabs her carpet-bag, which falls to the ground, takes her hand and drags her along. She and Steve turn for another wave of the hand and another farewell. She goes to the stage down the road. Steve goes up the road. Steve is heard taking charge of his horses. Clatter of wheels and hoofs of horses.*)

(*Voice of highwaymen*): Halt! Throw down that box, and be quick about it! (*stage stops. Shooting. Cry of some one wounded. Confusion. Struggle is heard. Highwayman, the tall one, comes in with heavy box. Breaks it open with a stone. Pours the gold into a sack. Other man comes in stumbling—falls dead. Tall highwayman puts hand to heart.*)

TALL HIGHWAYMAN: Dead! So that's the end of Bart! Mustn't leave any papers. (*puts his hand in pocket, draws out papers and puts them into his sack. Lifts and places body under the bushes. Lifts sack. Drags it after him heavily. Goes to rear and crawls down over the rocks to place of safety, down below.*)

(*Clatter of hoofs. Parson Hager appears on mule and dismounts.*)

PARSON HAGER: Shots! What does it mean? What has happened? (*Hastens in direction of stage up road. Returns, assisting Steve.*)

STEVE (*faintly*): They've done for me this time. I'll never go down to look out for the little gal. Oh, God! what'll become of her? Parson, promise to go and find her! (*dies*)

(*Parson prays.*)

ACT I.—Scene I.

(Water-front, wharf, San Francisco, arrival of ferryboat from Oakland. Crude, primitive landing. Gang-plank. Array of typical San Franciscans of that time. Passing off and on the boat. Mingling and meeting during the progress of this scene.)

ENSEMBLE OF CHARACTERS IN THE FOLLOWING SCENE:

(Elderly lady, Miss Harrington, wealthy in her own right, and her much younger brother, Will Harrington, about to go on the boat, when they meet the rich and aristocratic Mrs. Castleton and her two daughters coming off. As these two women desire to make a match between the brother and one of the daughters, they stop to talk. Joining the group comes Jim Castleton, a young society man of not good reputation. Coming off the boat are two girls together. One is Lily White, a pretty saleslady in a fashionable cloakstore; and to this pretty girl Castleton nods familiarly. With her is her friend, Kate Strong, with whom Miss Harrington's brother is in love. Already Kate has refused to marry him, owing to his sister's strong opposition, because Kate is a clerk in the land office. Miss Harrington wishes her brother to marry some one in her own social set. Emperor Norton passes on to the boat.

A youth comes to meet Kate and Lily. It is Kate's brother, Malcolm Strong, a student at Heald's Business College, where his sister is paying his way. He is modest and unassuming, a nice boy.

Two men come together, Morton the reporter, and Belmour the gambler, down the gang-plank.

Belmour is very tall and fair and with drooping moustache, wears a fur-lined overcoat. Morton is dark with short moustache. Belmour is inclined to be grave, Morton to be serio-comic. Both men wear soft hats of the so-called "slouched" variety.)

MORTON: Let us wait and get another look at that funny child in the red dress, with a gun belted on to her. I never saw anything quite as queer as that before.

BELMOUR (*abstractedly*): She looks like someone I used to know.

MORTON: Must be some one very innocent. (*laughs*)

BELMOUR: She has the eyes of my little sister who died twenty years ago.

MORTON: Here she is, and the hotel-runners after her. (*Babe* comes running down gang-plank, dragging her valise away from the runners of the hotels. Turns on them.)

BABE: Don't you dare to touch my carpet-sack!

(Runners close in around her calling: "Russouse," "Wot Cheer," "International 'Otel," "Lickouse."

ONE OF THEM: Oh, you'd better go with me, my dear, I'll take you to a good place.

BABE: I guess you won't. You bet I can take care of myself. (*snatches her valise away from another one, who tries to take it. Everybody looks. Her shawl comes off and she throws it over her arm while batiling to get her carpet-sack away from the man who has it in his strong grasp. Society women all look at her coldly.*)

BELMOUR (*advancing*): Drop it. (*his authority and cool manner affect them instantly. Each runs, calling as before, the name of the hotel he is running for as if nothing had happened.*)

BABE (*turns to Belmour, gratefully*): I thank you ever so much! Why, I thought they were going to take my carpet-sack away from me.

BELMOUR (*coldly*): Where is it you want to go?

BABE (*innocently*): Is the Cosmopolitan Hotel a nice place?

(*Belmour turns and looks at the group of ladies near, but they begin talking among themselves again, pointedly, so as not to be consulted. Belmour turns to Morton.*)

BELMOUR (*to Morton*): It is no place for a child to be alone.

MORTON: Where is she from?

BELMOUR: You'd better ask her.

MORTON: Where are you from, Miss?

BABE (*on guard*): That's my business, if you please.

MORTON (*laughing*): And have you any name, or do you expect to get along without one?

BABE (*guardedly*): No, I don't mind telling my name. It is Miss Robinson. (*Belmour and Morton discuss what to do.*)

(Enter a handsome woman, Mollie Darling. She stands, looking on, from one side.)

MOLLIE: So he has arrived at last! What is he doing with that child? (*a Keyman lumbers into sight with a big bunch of keys on his back and another in his hands. The Irish woman, Mrs. Spangler, comes off the boat with her son Bobby, a big, flashily-dressed fellow. They stop on seeing the Keyman.*)

KEYMAN: Hello!

BOBBY: Hello yourself, Henry! Any news about me gittin' on the force?

KEYMAN: Yes. You hang around here a minit an' watch me doin' politics. Maloney's down here now.

(*Maloney comes to the center and bows to Miss Harrington.*)

(*Mrs. Spangler, mother of Bobby, in a transport of joy.*)

BOBBY: What! Maloney?

KEYMAN: Yep! Boss of 'em all! If I could only git ye interdooced to 'im by a gent you'd be fixed. You'd git "on the force" all right.

MRS. SPANGLER: Oh, Hennery!

(Enters Al Kercheval, a weakling, son of rich parents, in tow of a rounder. He is dressed like a dude. The man he is with is a capper, showing him around. The Keyman recognizes the capper.)

KEYMAN: Here's your chanct, Bobby, I knows dat guy. Come along. He's a pal o' mine. Jest you mind me, an' I'll git ye inter good sassiety with them high-toned fellers. (to capper) Dat you, Frenchy? Want ye to do a favor fer a fren' o' mine.

CAPPER: Hello, Hennery! Wot d'ye want?

KEYMAN: I don't want nothin' fer myself (*scowling*), but I want ye to interdooce my fren', Robert Spangler—him an' me went to school together—to Maloney.

CAPPER: Ye don't want much, do ye? Interdooce him to Maloney?

KEYMAN: Ye see, he wants a job on the force, so's to help his poor old mudder. You interdooce this dude o' yours, ye picked up somewherees an' then my fren' right after him, like they was brothers.

CAPPER (*laughing*): Brothers! That's a good one! And may be you want to count in too as triplets?

KEYMAN: No, I don't. I'd give the hull thing away, by bein' around. I'll make myself scarce, and leave it all to you. If you don't, I'll go tell that feller ye picked up somewherees a few things 'bout you.

FRENCHY THE CAPPER (*putting up a hand to hush him up*): Sh! Leave that to me. I'll do it up brown. (*he introduces the Irish boy to the young dude and presently they go forward and intercept Maloney, who holds the center of the stage, an object of general admiration.*)

FRENCHY (*continuing*): Good day, Mr. Maloney, may I present two friends of mine, who are very anxious to meet such a man as yourself? This is Mr. Kercheval of Sacramento, visiting our city for the first time. And this is Mr. Spangler, an old school-mate, and he wants to get on the force. Ye see, he is a Native Son, and he wants to help his old mother along.

MALONEY (*benevolently*): Quite right, my son, quite right! I'll see what we can do for you. (*shakes hands with both. They fall back, each to his place.*)

MOLLIE: That young fellow must have some money to throw around, or George would not be wasting his time on him. (*Capper and Kercheval pass near her, and she says softly: "How are you, George?" Capper returns and introduces Kercheval.*)

CAPPER: Shall I bring my good friend around to see you tonight, at the hotel? I see Belmour's returned from his mining-trip. What's he doing with the kid and the carpet-sack? Looks too funny for anything!

MOLLIE: Yes, doesn't it? But he generally knows what he's about.

(*Passing near her, going to the boat, is a woman, in severe costume of Quaker gray, and beside her a trained nurse. The latter is very handsome, but subdued in manner. Mollie draws back as she and the nurse face each other for a brief second.*)

CAPPER (*looking after her*): Why, that is Sister Gertrude, isn't it?

MOLLIE (*angrily*): Yes, she seems to dog my steps wherever I go.

(As the two women pass on, Miss Harrington speaks to them kindly, and they go on to the boat unobserved by Morton whose back is turned as they pass. Jim Castleton and Lily exchange a word. William Harrington tries to detain Kate and her brother. Babe stands, looking with round-eyed wonder at all the people. As Maloney passes her, he sees how innocent she is, and he takes off his hat to her as he goes up the gang-plank. Conversation resumed between Morton and Belmour.)

BELMOUR: Now, Morton, being a reporter, you know the ins and outs of the city better than I do. Certainly you know some place where this child could go, better than to a public hotel.

MORTON (sharpening his pencil): She's too old for the Orphan Asylum and too young for the Old Ladies' Home. Rather guess you've got a problem on your hands, old man.

BABE (catching this conversation): A reporter! H'm! He'd soon be finding out why I left home. I'm not going to talk to that man. I don't like him at all (*childishly petulant*).

MORTON: Oh, I have it! There's an old school teacher, Miss Wiggins, and her friend, Sister Gertrude, a trained nurse, they could tell you what to do. Here's their number on Howard street. (*writes address on card*.)

BELMOUR: That's more like it. I'll take her there myself.

BABE: But why can't I go to the Cosmopolitan Hotel? My friend Steve thought it would be all right, and he's comin' down to look out for me.

BELMOUR (coldly): You tell her, Morton.

MORTON: Well, because it's changed hands now, Miss Robinson. It's a kind of a go-as-you-please! 'Taint going to be a hotel any more. It's been sold out for another kind of business.

BABE: Oh, I don't mind. I'm not at all particular.

MORTON: Great heavens! What are you going to do with her?

BELMOUR (resolutely): I'm going to take her to your Miss Wiggins. (*takes up the faded carpet-sack and leads the way. To Babe*) You need some one to look after you. The hotel's no place for you.

MORTON (with a *serio-comic smile and lift of his hat in mock politeness*): Good afternoon, Miss Robinson.

BABE (with great assumption of dignity): Good afternoon, Mr. Reporter. (*follows Belmour*)

MORTON (looking after them both): Thank Heaven, it is none of my affair (*pauses*), and yet, I can't help wondering what is to become of her.

(End of First Scene, First Act.)

SCENE II.

*Parlor of Mollie Darling, Cosmopolitan Hotel. Evening.
Enter Mollie and Babe together.*

MOLLIE: Now just make yourself at home, my dear, and may be I'll sing for you after a while. Are you fond of music?

BABE: H'm, I should think I am! Almost as fond of it as I am of reading, only not quite. (*turns to book held in her hand, with finger keeping place.*) I never read a book like this before. It's kind of French, isn't it? (*Reads title*) Less Miserables—queer sort of name, isn't it?

MOLLIE (*correcting her pronunciation*): Lay Meesir-ah-ble.

BABE (*obediently*): Lay Meesir-ah-ble. But I can make it out all right, because it tells about a poor little girl and a good man who looks out for her, just like my Steve.

MOLLIE: Shut up your book a minute, and let's have a talk, all about your own sweet little self.

BABE (*sturdily*): No. I ain't very sweet, I can tell you that, right now, but I can look out for myself, you can bet, and that's what sweet people can't do.

MOLLIE (*playfully, shaking her finger at her*): With a great big pistol belted on to your waist, like you were when I saw you first, today! (*she laughs merrily*)

BABE (*mortified*): I suppose it wasn't quite the thing, was it?

MOLLIE: No, it was not comme il faut.

BABE: Oh, you can talk French?

MOLLIE: How do you know it's French?

BABE (*cunningly*): Oh, I know a few things. I am not as green as I look. I can say "Donny moy de pang si vous plait," when I'm hungry.

MOLLIE (*laughs and pats her approvingly*): Now, tell me what do you intend to do?

BABE: Oh, I'm going to get some kind of work to do. Steve thinks I'm a baby, but I'll show him I can take of myself.

MOLLIE: Who is this Steve you speak of?

BABE: Oh, he's a kind of an adopted father of mine, and he's coming down in a few weeks to look after me.

MOLLIE: How would you like to stay with me? You would not have to soil your hands, but keep them white and soft.

BABE (*holding up her hands and looking at them, disapprovingly*): Humph! They've never been white, and I don't care if they ain't. They're useful hands. (*abruptly*) But what would I have to do?

MOLLIE: I would like to have you for a little companion, to go shopping with me, and to wait on me.

BABE: Would you learn me French?

MOLLIE (*correcting her*): Teach you French, you mean. You would have to do the learning.

BABE (*subdued*): Yes, teach. Would you teach me French?

MOLLIE: Of course, I would. I have been in Paris, and they say I talk like a native.

BABE (*clapping hands, childishly*): Oh! won't that be fine! How glad I am that that Miss Wiggins and that Sister Gertrude were not at home when Mr. Belmour took me there today.

MOLLIE: I'm surprised at him, for they're not nice people, at all.

BABE: How glad I am that he let me come here, or I should never have met you. Is it true that it ain't going to be a hotel pretty soon, that it's been sold out for another kind of business?

MOLLIE: Who told you that?

BABE: Why, Mr. Belmour's friend. He said it was no place for me (*looking around the walls.*) But I don't see anything the matter. You can't believe these men.

MOLLIE: Of course not. He was just fooling. Now how would you like it? to stay with me? and you could go driving with me in my little phaeton, and have a lovely time. But you would have to change your name to something nice and stylish.

BABE (*abruptly*): Huh? Change my name? Oh, no. Steve told me not to do anything like that. He said it was like a snake changing its skin every year, but bein' the same old snake, just the same.

MOLLIE (*angry. Gets up suddenly and drags a chair out of its place with such force it is knocked over. Turns to her again*): What a simple child you are! You've got an awful lot to learn if you're going to stay with me!

BABE: You are not mad at me, are you, Mollie?

MOLLIE (*smiling*): Not in the least.

BABE (*hesitating*): It does not seem quite right, does it? that I should go on calling you just "Mollie," but you see, I wasn't introduced, and so I don't know your other name.

MOLLIE (*reserved and uncomfortable*): That's all right. I'll introduce myself: Miss Mary Belle Darling, only they call me "Mollie."

BABE: What a pretty name, and it just suits you too.

MOLLIE (*slyly*): What a pity your name isn't Mabel Sinclair. That would suit you to a T. It is so stylish! And, you know, you have to be stylish if you want to get along in a big city like San Francisco.

BABE (*nonchalantly*): Oh! I don't know! Steve doesn't think so. He says, "If you keep on the chalk-line, you'll be all right."

MOLLIE (*angrily*): You'll have to stop talking about "Steve" if you're going to stay with me. He'll spoil all your chances to get on, I can tell you. He is nothing but an old fogey. The times have changed since he was young.

BABE (*opening her book, irresolutely*): That's all right, but I wouldn't give up my Steve for the whole world! So, I'll hurry up and finish the book and give it back to you, Miss Darling.

MOLLIE (*changing at once*): Oh! I was only saying that to try you. Of course, he is all right, and a pretty fine man, I should judge, by all you say of him. Now, I am going to have company, to-night, so you just sit down and read your book in peace. (*knock at the door, Babe pays no attention. Finds a corner on a sofa, and curls herself up over her book and becomes so abstracted she hears no one and sees no one. Enter George, Frenchy the capper, and Alf Kercheval. Give greetings and suggest a game of cards. Mollie gets out a card-table and sets the chairs.*

Another knock is heard.. Enter Morton, asking for Belmour. Mollie explains that he will be back presently. Invites Morton in. He looks around and sees Babe.)

MORTON (*aside*): I thought so. Miss Wiggins was not at home, and so she insisted on coming here. Even a sportsman will give a bird one chance for its life! I promise that I will give her two. I will wait here till Belmour comes, so I might as well join in the game. (*keeps looking at Babe, who is absorbed in her book.*)

MOLLIE: We ought to have one more hand. (*goes over to the sofa and rouses Babe, and draws her forward to introduce her.*) Gentlemen! This is my little cousin, and her name is Mabel Sinclair.

BABE (*as if startled into defiance, gives her hair a shake out of her eyes, and throws back her head*): No, you don't, Mollie! I'm nobody's cousin, and my name is Babe Robinson.

MOLLIE (*laughing*): That's just a little joke of mine. Sit down and talk to Mr. Kercheval, a minute. He's from Sacramento.

BABE (*still with book in hand*): Oh, from Sacramento! They have lovely roses there, haven't they?

KERCHEVAL: Ya-as—roses—doncher—know? (*he slips his fingers into his collar, and rubs his neck against it with a nervous twist.*)

BABE: How long since you came from there?

KERCHEVAL (*with halting utterance, in a high pitched voice*): I came down—I came down—doncher know! Well, I ran away—doncher know. It ain't no good to stay up there, and have my father send me to school—and college—and all those things—yes! when I can run away, and see the world, yes, see the world (*voice runs down to faintness.*)

BABE: Did you run away from home because your folks was real miserable, and you couldn't stand it no longer?

KERCHEVAL (*with a vacant laugh*): Oh, no! They're real rich and all I've got to do is to telegraph for more money.

BABE: Oh! I should think your mother would feel awful.

FRENCHY THE CAPPER: Which shall it be, Mr. Kercheval, euchre or whist? (*he shuffles the cards.*)

KERCHEVAL (*coming to table*): I ain't much on whist, but I'm pretty slick on poker.

MOLLIE: Come, Babe, sit next to me.

MORTON: Babe! What a name. Still it seems to suit her, somehow.

CAPPER: Come, help us out, we need you, little one. (*he shuffles cards.*)

BABE (*wonderingly*): Cards? Do you play cards in the city? Why! I thought that nobody but poor wretches, who got landed high-and-dry in a played-out mining-camp, ever played cards 'cause there was nothing else to do. Oh, I hate the sight of 'em, and I promised Steve never to touch one, if I died for it. He said they were the devil's visiting cards.

(*Capper and Mollie arise and show signs of sudden anger.*)

KERCHEVAL (*with knowing waggle of his head*): I ain't afraid of him, no, I ain't afraid of him. The devil can't scare me—cause there ain't no devil.

CAPPER (*clapping him on the back*): You're a brick, Kercheval. Good for you! (*Babe goes back to the sofa and her book as before.*)

MORTON (*aside*): Can't I make something happen—somehow? I never felt so helpless in my life.

CAPPER (*resuming his play*): Oh, let's make it a dollar a chip. There isn't much excitement in just playing for fun.

KERCHEVAL: It's all right, doncher know? (*he puts his hand in his pocket and takes out a couple of twenties and puts them on the table. Mollie's eyes glitter.*)

Enter Belmour. *He is very pale and tired-looking but more alert mentally than ever. They all greet him noisily, save Morton, who rises and stands, waiting for a chance to speak to him aside.*

BELMOUR (*rubbing his hands together*): I'm chilled by the night-wind. This is a devil of a climate. Haven't you anything warm?

(*Mollie gets decanters and glasses, passes around to the men, who all drink, save Morton, who still stands. Cigars are lighted. Mollie takes a cigarette. Babe lost in her book, comes to a touching part where poor little Cosette is in danger of losing her good man by his being buried alive in the coffin. She cannot restrain herself and begins to sob.*)

BELMOUR: What the devil is that child doing here? I told you, Mollie, I didn't want her around.

MOLLIE (*lays down her cigarette, goes to her side and pets her affectionately*): Why, Babe, crying over a book as if you did not have troubles enough of your own to cry over. There, there!

MORTON: I'd like to speak to you a minute, Belmour.

BELMOUR (*turns to him. Others chat to themselves*): What is it, Morton?

MORTON: Say, look here! I thought you were going to do differently by the child. See how young and innocent she is. She ought not to be here. You said she had the eyes of your little sister. Now you wouldn't want a sister of yours to wind up like this, would you?

BELMOUR (*impassively*): I tried to find your Miss Wiggins. It was no use. The child was determined to come here. I tried to keep her away from Mollie. She walked straight into her arms. Don't you see it is Fate? We may as well give it up.

BABE (*recovering*): I know I'm awful foolish, but I was just thinking about that poor little Cossety.

MOLLIE (*correcting*): Cosette.

BABE (*obediently*): Cosette.

FRENCHY THE CAPPER: There, take the evening paper to read, little one. (*he hands over one that he takes out of his pocket. Maybe you'll find something in it to make you laugh. (sings from the opera of "Lucretia Borgia:")*) "It is better to laugh than be sighing." (Morton still stands, irresolute. The others sit at the card-table.)

MOLLIE (*to Belmour*): What's the matter? You look so strange.

BELMOUR (*dealing the cards with a graceful movement*): I've taken a bad cold on my lungs, but I don't think it is going to be fatal. (*said as an attempt at a joke.*)

BABE (*reading the paper, gives a terrible, sharp scream*): Oh! Oh! Oh! It's my Steve, my Steve! He's dead! He's been killed by a stage-robber! What shall I do! (*buries her head in her arm on the sofa-arm. All are shocked save Kercheval who smiles inanely.*)

CAPPER (*explaining*): Of course, I'd no idea—I knew there was a new stage hold-up on the Wellington road away up in Nevada, but how was I to know where she came from?

MORTON (*going over to her, trying to win her confidence*): But what has this to do with you, Miss Robinson?

BABE: It was my Steve—my friend—my adopted father, who has known me since I was a baby, and he was coming down here to look after me—but now there is no one! (*her tears start afresh, and she feels in her pocket for the handkerchief which is not there.*)

MORTON (*pressing his fresh pocket-handkerchief into her hand. aside*): As long as she hangs on to my handkerchief, I'm going to hang on to her. It shall be a bond between us. (*he turns to Belmour*) Fate is a curious thing, Belmour, isn't it? You know we were just speaking of fate. To think of there being just one man in the whole world standing between little Miss Robinson here, and the world—let us say—and, by a singular fatality some ordinary ruffian going to work and selecting that particular stage, and taking off that one man of all men! By Jove! I don't know what you think about it, but I call it mighty rough.

(*The newspaper is being passed around.*)

BELMOUR: I don't feel like cards tonight. This cold's getting worse. What do you do for a cold, anyway?

KERCHEVAL (*in a high key*): Whiskey's pretty good! My father's a doctor, and he always takes whiskey.

(*Morton turns back to Babe. She has assumed stolidity. Offers him back his handkerchief.*)

MORTON (*indulgently*): I want you to keep it. I was in hopes it would be a kind of a bond between us, and that it would help you to know and understand that I wanted to be your friend.

BABE: I'm sorry, but somehow I don't seem to like you, Mr. Morton. You tried to deceive me, and keep me from coming here. Mollie told me you were just fooling, and that your Miss Wiggins and Sister Gertrude were not nice at all.

MORTON (*suddenly*): Don't you know that Mollie lies? That her hellish face is painted, and that this is no place for a child like you? Steve wouldn't like it at all. (*Babe is stunned. She still thinks he is fooling, but gives a look at Mollie. Near the piano stand Belmour, Mollie and the capper.*)

MOLLIE: That young one is simply awful. But I'll break her in, in a day or two.

CAPPER: With that innocent air of hers, she'll be worth thousands to us.

BELMOUR (*in suppressed anger*): I won't have her around. She shall leave the hotel tomorrow.

MOLLIE (*surprised*): But I've taken a fancy to her.

BELMOUR (*fiercely*): And I say she leaves here tomorrow, damn you!

(Knock at the door. Bell-boy enters, with card, which he hands to Belmour.)

MOLLIE (*crossly*): Who is it that comes so late?

BELMOUR (*with hand up for silence*): Hush! It is a lady.

(Enter lady of prim appearance in gray garments, with gray hair.)

MISS WIGGINS (*advancing to Belmour*): Is this the gentleman who left a note for Miss Wiggins? I know it is late, but I only arrived at home a few moments ago, and decided to come at once.

(Babe is scanning the faces of them all. She is amazed to see how pale every one is but Mollie.)

BELMOUR: I thank you for coming. The child is here. I want you to take her away with you. (*he puts his hand into his pocket and draws out a handful of twenties, and offers them to her.*) When you need more, let me know.

MISS WIGGINS: I am poor, it is true, but I came to befriend the child without any thought of compensation.

BELMOUR: I am aware of that, madam. Take it and put it in your bag for her. (*she accepts it. He turns around, peremptorily*) Mollie! Make that child put on her things and go with Miss Wiggins at once!

MOLLIE: What? Now? So late! It is twelve o'clock!

BELMOUR (*fiercely*): Do as I tell you!

MORTON (*aside*): Who would have ever taken Miss Wiggins for an angel in disguise!

MOLLIE (*to Babe, unwillingly*): Come, Babe, the lady has come to take you away. Belmour says you are to go with her.

BABE (*stupidly*): What? Not to go away from you, Mollie? Does he say that? (*She is puzzled.*)

MOLLIE (*sullenly*): That's what he says.

BABE (*looking from one face to another*): Not now?

BELMOUR (*sternly*): Yes, the sooner, the better.

MORTON (*aside*): Great Jehosaphat! The stupidity of innocence simply surpasses belief!

MISS WIGGINS (*advancing and putting her hand on the girl's shoulder, gently*): I am sure, dear child, the gentleman speaks nothing but the truth. This is not a place for a young girl like you.

BABE (*beginning to tremble, as the reality dawns on her*): Why, I'm so dazed, reading the book and seeing so many strange faces that

it seems as if I was in a kind of dream; and perhaps it is a horrible dream—all of it—and my Steve is not dead, after all.

MISS WIGGINS (*kindly, but firmly*): Come, my child, get your hat and come with me.

BABE (*looks around from face to face, coming to that of Mollie, last of all. She sees there the paint and the mocking smile. She turns to Miss Wiggins and clings to her arm*): Oh! take me away! It isn't a terrible dream. It is true, all of it. (*door opens, Sister Gertrude enters. Babe runs to her. The two women lead her from the room. The capper and Kercheval and Morton take their leave and go. Mollie and Belmour are left standing in the middle of the floor, facing each other.*)

MOLLIE: Why did you take so much trouble about this little fool?

BELMOUR: She reminded me of some one.

MOLLIE: Bah! I know you've been away somewhere, and you have come back with plenty of money. You were pale as death, tonight. What does it mean? You were afraid, you were afraid. Don't you fool yourself. I know as well as if you had told me why you sent her away. You are afraid. You are afraid.

BELMOUR: You devil! Do you think I am going to stand your vile temper much longer?

MOLLIE: That's it! Get me started! Have me tell you the whole story, for though you've fooled the detectives you can't fool me. (*she makes a sudden move. Drops down in front of him, puts her head close to the floor. Then springs up, alert and triumphant.*) I know where you've been. I can smell the sage-brush on your boots. You've been to Nevada.

BELMOUR (*with sudden move toward her, then restrains himself, hoarsely spoken*): Well! what do you mean to do about it?

MOLLIE: That depends on you. I could do almost anything if you should leave me, as you sometimes threaten. I don't propose to come down in the world and be kicked about from pillar to post. We get along, all right. Why shouldn't we keep it up? I mean that you shall stay with me. That's what I mean—that you shall never leave me now!

BELMOUR (*sinking into a chair weakly, holding a handkerchief to his lips. As he catches it away, there is a crimson stain upon it*): Very well.

MOLLIE (*springing to his side*): What is that? Oh, poor Robert! (*applies remedies.*) I'll nurse you! I'll take good care of you. (*significantly.*) Remember, that as long as you stay with me, you will be perfectly safe.

(End of Scene.)

SCENE III.

(*Hotel corridor. Morton waiting and walking up and down. Enter Miss Wiggins and Sister Gertrude, with Babe sobbing. Miss Wiggins has the old carpet-sack.*)

MISS WIGGINS: Oh, dear! The poor little thing has been crying so, we haven't a dry handkerchief left.

MORTON: Let me carry that for you to the cars.

MISS WIGGINS: Be careful! There's a horrid pistol in it.

BABE (*rousing up*): I don't want that old pistol any more. It's no good. That don't help you any to take care of yourself.

MISS WIGGINS: That's just what I've been telling her. Won't you take it, Mr. Morton, and keep it for us?

BABE (*childishly*): Yes, please. It was Steve's; but I'd rather you'd have it.

SISTER GERTRUDE (*getting it out, and passing it over to him*): I'm sure it will be best for all of us, for Miss Wiggins is not at all well, and it makes her very nervous to have it around.

MORTON (*putting the six-shooter into his pocket*): Ah! what would we do without women like you in this old world? You are the salt of the earth, that's sure. (*to Babe, cheerfully.*) Don't you worry, little Miss Robinson, as long as you have friends like these, you are perfectly safe. (*Takes up carpet-sack, and walks along with them.*)

(End of First Act, Third Scene.)

(Lapse of One Year.)



ACT II.—Scene I.

(Manning's Oyster Grotto. Street scene, Pine between Montgomery and Kearny. Bohemian Club. Art Association. Market on ground-floor. People coming out and going in. Jim Castleton and Harrington meet Lily White and Kate Strong. Jim puts a ring on Lily's hand. Kate says "No" to Harrington, as before. Emperor Norton walks along, in full regalia. Stops, and gives a child the button-hole-bouquet, from his lapel. The Keyman comes shuffling along, stops to look at some laborers in the street. They put down their dinner pails. Along comes a very poor specimen of a youth, tattered and torn. It is Al Kercheval. He stops and looks at these dinner pails, goes up to one, and takes out a piece of bread, turns around to eat it while looking in the window of the restaurant.)

KEYMAN (going up to him and giving him a slap on the back): Knowned ye the minit I seen ye. Wot ye doin'?

KERCHEVAL (frightened): Don't tell on me. I'm seein' the world!

KEYMAN: Yes, ye are! Like a little lamb. Where's yer fren'? Where's Frenchy, the capper?

KERCHEVAL: Sh! (looking around, piteously.) A sailor stabbed him with a knife, an' I run away.

KEYMAN: But you! you're a gent! You can talk to Maloney. Wot d'ye say? Come along wid me an' help my fren' to git on de force, and I'll look out for ye! (waves his hand to some one) Here he is now. (Bobby Spangler, in flashy clothes, appears.) Don't you 'member him? Ye was both interdooced to Maloney ter wanst! (to Bobby.) Here's the swell guy that kin git ye on de force. Let's take him home and dress him up and set him up on his pins again! He's a gent, he is, but he don't know any too much (tapping his forehead significantly).

KERCHEVAL (protesting): I'm seein' the world, Yaas, I'm seein' the world.

(Enter two, Belmour, with his hat pulled down over his eyes, over-coat pulled up, and Mollie Darling, in large wrap, concealing her figure, and heavily veiled.)

KERCHEVAL (smiles inanely at them, goes up and extends his hand, and drawls): How do you do, Miss Darling? I haven't seen you for a long time. No, I haven't seen you!

MOLLIE (lifting her veil): Why, it's Mr. Kercheval! You haven't been having very good luck lately, have you? You must let me give you something.

KERCHEVAL (protesting): No. I only wanted to speak to you, that's all, and here are my friends. (he tries to tell their names. Mollie smiles on them.)

MOLLIE (*aside*): Robert! Speak to them. They may be of use to us. (*Belmour shakes hands with them.*)

MOLLIE: You must come and see me soon. Now, remember. (*she puts something into the Keyman's hand for Kercheval, and gives him her address. Pulls her veil down again.*)

MOLLIE (*sweetly, to Keyman*): Take good care of Mr. Kercheval. (*to Belmour.*) I shouldn't wonder if we could get that fellow with the keys to help us. He looks clever. (*policeman passes, views them closely*)

BELMOUR: I shall not come out again and run such a risk as this.

MOLLIE: No, we'll have to be more careful, and you'll have to go away pretty soon.

BELMOUR: Yes, but where? (*they depart.*)

KEYMAN: I ain't a wise gezabo, huh? Never said a word! An' look! See what she gimme fer Kertch! That's wot comes o' bein' in wid a gent.

KERCHEVAL (*mildly and hesitatingly*): Are we pards?

KEYMAN: You bet we're pards! An' now I'm goin' ter take ye home wid me, an' learn ye the key-biznes. (*the two go out together.*)

Mrs. Spangler comes out of the market with her bundles, and Bobby goes along with her.

A small figure appears, coming along slowly. It is Babe Robinson, in a shabby frock, with circular cape and small sailor-hat on' her head. She is very pale.

BABE (*stopping to look into The Grotto window*): I don't know what I'm going to do next. It is always bad luck for me. Maybe it's no good—my walking a chalk line! Maybe nothing good is ever going to happen to me! Why should I be punished! I am innocent. If only I could get something to eat! Why should the world be full of good things for everybody, and nothing for me?

(Enter Morton. *He stops and looks at his watch.*)

MORTON: I've just an hour to spare. The hanging is at one o'clock. That gives me time for my lunch and a smoke. First, it's a wedding, then a murder, then a hanging. Great Jupiter! What a way for a man to spend his life! If only my grandfather had not started on that law-suit, and swamped the whole family, I should now be a young blood myself, and have enjoyed life with the best of them. Well! Who knows! We may win it yet. (*he walks to the entrance of the Grotto. Sees the girl standing there. Begins to scan her and then walks up to her.*) Why, bless my soul! Is this little Miss Robinson?

BABE (*gives a quick look*): Yes, it's me, Mr. Morton.

MORTON: Dear me! How you've changed! Where are those good friends of yours, Miss Wiggins and Sister Gertrude?

BABE: Miss Wiggins died at the hospital, six months ago, and Sister Gertrude is away, traveling with a patient.

MORTON: And where do you live now?

BABE: Oh, there's a good-natured Irish woman lets me have a

little room at her house. But she's very poor too, and can't look out for me.

MORTON: I'm going in to luncheon here. Won't you come in and keep me company?

BABE (*hesitating*): Is it a real nice restaurant, where nice ladies go?

MORTON (*comprehending*): Why, of course! The best ladies and the best society in San Francisco come here. I'll take you in, and show you how nice they are! But they won't let a man go upstairs, not if he was the Governor of the State of California, nor a minister of the gospel, to sit with those nice folks, unless he has a lady with him. So you see, you'll have to take me there, otherwise I'll have to sit down-stairs with the miserable men. (*jokingly. He opens the door and waits for her to pass in. She smiles wanly.*)

(End of First Scene.)

SCENE II.

(*Restaurant tables. Morton and Babe seek a table. When the shrimps* are set before them, she begins to tear off the shells and eat them eagerly, with big bites of bread and butter.*)

BABE (*talking nervously, and very fast*): I didn't know much when I came down here last year, did I, Mr. Morton? But, oh! I know lots now, and I tell you, it's a mighty tough world! That's what it is! I've had a terrible time, since my darling Miss Wiggins died. I've done almost everything. I've 'tended babies and run errands, and yesterday I tried to sew some shirts. But would you believe it? I sewed the sleeves in wrong, and the man wouldn't pay me, of course, and I—well, I get pretty hungry. It's a pity that a good dinner like this can't last a week, isn't it? If only we didn't have to eat! Why, that is the greatest nuisance of it all!

MORTON (*perceiving that she has been almost starving*): And are you actually alone? Why, where are Belmour and Mollie Darling?

BABE: Oh, I've never seen anything of them since that night. It was good of Mr. Belmour to make me go with Miss Wiggins, and pay my board, enough for six months, in advance, wasn't it? I'll always be grateful to him for that!

MORTON: Yes, that was pretty white of Belmour! By the way, have you ever heard anything about the robber who killed your friend, Steve? I heard, today, something about it. They think that they have got on his trail. You know that there is a five-thousand-dollar reward for him, dead or alive, and somebody wants to get it!

BABE: I hope they will find him. A man like that ought to be made to suffer! When you kill anybody for money, that's awful!

MORTON: So it is! (*aside.*) Great Jupiter! My conscience is snowing me under, I've got to do something for this child. Giving her a dinner is not the end of my duty in this matter. Hang it all! it is only the beginning. (*to Babe.*) If my mother were here—but she's in New

*It was the custom at that time to serve shrimps free while one studied the bill of fare.

York—she'd know what to do. Why don't you get a trade, you poor little Miss Robinson?

BABE (*joyously*): Bring on your trade! I'll learn anything anybody will let me.

MORTON: How would you like book-binding, or type-setting? The only trouble is—how would you live till you learned how?

BABE: I can manage to get along on three dollars a week. Don't you suppose I could make that much?

MORTON: Good Lord! And I spend more than that on cigars and drinks! (*he looks around. Sees people he knows, but to whom he could not introduce his poor little waif. Marie Castleton gives him a nod, but her mother and sisters and Miss Harrington ignore him. They are too stylish. Then a business woman, Mrs. Richmond, comes in. Takes her seat, and two girls, Kate Strong and Lily White, arrive, looking around for a place to sit.*)

MRS. RICHMOND: Oh, Miss Strong, come here, and sit with me, and your friend, too.

BABE (*wonderingly*): I know them. I know those two pretty young ladies; but they don't know me! They live in the same house that I do, with Mrs. Spangler. Only I am away up stairs, in the attic.

MORTON (*with suppressed emotion*): What is it, Miss Robinson, that helps you to keep from stealing, or anything else, when you get so hungry and forlorn? And how do you keep up your courage?

BABE: Because, I've never done anything mean, and I ain't a-going to. And shall I tell you everything? It's because I don't ever want to do anything that will make my poor little children ashamed of me.

MORTON: Well (*he hits his fist on the table*), if this big city can't find honest work for a child like you, it is fit for the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah. Do you see that lady over there? I know her. She has a co-operative printing business, and I am going to try to get you over to that table where you belong, with those young ladies that you know and who do not know you, though they live under the same roof! Now you just watch me do it, for I've got to run away in just a minute. (*Morton arises, goes over to the table, most gracefully.*)

MORTON: Why, Mrs. Richmond, how do you do? (*she introduces Lily White and Kate Strong. He bows and smiles with all his art. His manner is most irresistible.*) I have a favor to ask of you, Mrs. Richmond. Can't you make a place here for a child who is alone in the world, and let her learn to set type down at your co-operative printing? I'll stand sponsor for her?

MRS. RICHMOND (*business woman*): Of course, I will, Mr. Morton, for you have done many a favor for me. Where is she?

MORTON: Right here. Shall I bring her over? And, by the way, she lives in the same house with Miss White and Miss Strong. (*he fetches her over.*)

MISS STRONG: So she does. Poor little thing! I have seen her looking over the banisters. Haven't you, Lily?

LILY: Why, yes.

MORTON (*introducing them. Aside*): My God! To think that this is left to me to do! (*to Babe.*) But I must go. I have an appointment at one. Good-bye, Miss Robinson. Good afternoon, ladies. I hope you will all become great friends! (*aside, as he reaches the door and looks back once more.*) The child is no longer alone in the world.

(End of Act Two, Scene Two.)
(Lapse of Four Months.)



ACT III.—Scene I.

(Street scene. It is bright morning. Outside of rooming-house of Mrs. Spangler, Howard street near Fifth. Three stories and basement of dilapidated house, with wide front steps. As curtain goes up, it discloses Minerva, a tall, lanky girl, Dickie Gusset, a rough boy, Billy Gusset, a weak little fellow, always tumbling down, Kree Gusset, a lame girl with a big shoe on one foot, and five other children of various sizes and sorts playing "Ring-a-round-a-Rosy" in front of Mrs. Spangler's rooming-house for poor people.)

MINERVA: Oh, let's play Old Diggelly Bones?

CHORUS (in rapture): Old Diggelly Bones! (they all run for the steps and seat themselves in expectation, save Minerva, Dickie and Kree.)

DICKIE: Me! Me! I'm goin' ter be "old Diggelly Bones."

MINERVA: And I'll be Big Sister.

CHORUS: No! let Kree be the Sister. She knows how to take care of children, she does!

MINERVA: All right, then, I'll be the mother. (she begins to name them according to the game.) Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Now, Big Sister, you take care of the children and don't let old Diggelly Bones get them. (Minerva goes off.)

DICKIE (with staccato voice, coming forward): Gimme a match! to light my pipe, or else—

(Door opens at top of steps. The scrub-woman appears, Biddy the Bogie, Mrs. Spangler's old sister, still redolent of the bogs of old Ireland. She is a witchlike figure with head tied up in a three-cornered handkerchief, and many thick petticoats on, and a ragged apron over all, as if she labored under the hallucination that the more terrible one looks while at work the better the work will be done. She has pails and mops and brooms ready at hand. Is very stern and forbidding. Waves a feather-duster at the children, who become very angry at this interruption of their dearly beloved game.)

BIDDY, THE BOGIE: Whisht wid ye! Go away at wanst and lave a buddy in pace! Some leddies and gents is comin' an' dey can't git in!

(Children raise an outcry at being driven away, all save little lame Kree who stands apart from the rest, a pathetic figure. Biddy shakes her fist at Dickie who defies her. Minerva, in revenge, starts a new game in derision of the poor scrub-woman and presently all but Kree are in couples marching up and down. Kree still stands.)

CHILDREN (singing):

Here we go, two by two,
Dressed in yeller, pink and blue,
Not afraid of Boogie Boo
Here she comes! O-o-o-o-h!

(Ending with a pretended scream of terror as they run down the street.)

BIDDY, THE BOGIE: Now, thin, I'll lave me things here an' git the rist of them. (Goes within and closes the door. As she does so, the children all rush back to the steps and begin "Old Diggelly Bones" again where they had left off.)

DICKIE (with staccato voice supposed to be blood-curdling): Give me a match to light my pipe, or else—

VOICE (from within, wearily): Car-o-line! Car-o-line!

MINERVA: Kree, your mother's calling you.

KREE (cheerfully): Yes, Ma, I'm coming. (to the children) I guess the baby waked up. (Kree departs. Goes in small gate to basement-door. Discussion arises. Who is to take the place of Kree, now left vacant.)

SATURDAY: Can't I be Big Sister?

MINERVA: No, I'll be the Big Sister because that is the most important. Saturday, you can be the mother.

DICKIE (advancing trying to look ferocious, repeats in staccato): Gimme a match to light my pipe, or else Diggelly Digelly Bones'll get ye! (door opens suddenly and Biddy appears and they all run helter-skelter, tumbling over each other.)

BIDDY (standing with a paper bag in her hands): Come back wid yees! Here's a cookie fur ye—an' now be good byes an' girrls an' lemme git the work done. (they crowd around her laughing and talking. She gives each one a cookie.) Now, be off wid yees! I'm goin' ter clane the steps. (begins to sweep. They go off skipping and are disappearing one by one. Kree comes out with a baby in her arms.)

KREE: Dickie and Billy, Ma wants you, right away.

(The two boys hold up their cookies and give her a bite as they pass her and go within. Biddy leans over and gives her the paper-bag of cakes. Kree smiles and follows the boys within. Almost immediately Dickie and Billy come out again holding a very large market-basket between them by the handle, and go slowly down the street.)

BIDDY, THE BOGIE (leaning over and calling out to neighbor, next door, through the open window where he sits reading the morning-paper): An' how arr ye this marnin', Misther O'Neil?

NEIGHBOR O'NEIL (from next door): An' is ut yersilf, Misthress Egan?

BIDDY, THE BOGIE: It is that same, Misther O'Neil! An' wot's the news?

NEIGHBOR O'NEIL: Great things is happenin'! Great things! But wait an' I'll be comin' to tell ye. (appears in his morning-gown and slippers and smoking-cap, the picture of a prosperous comfortable citizen of that time,) Wot d'ye think? Th' Anti-Coolie question is goin' to pass in Washington, D. C. General Garfield is nominated fur prisdint, an' wot's the biggest thing of all, theer's goin' to be a rollin'-mill put up by me friend, Peter Donohue,* down on First and Mission street. It's fur

*The statuary-group "Mechanics" which beautifies Market street, near First, is here placed in honor of Peter Donohue, and this rolling-mill, now no more.

the wurkin' man! An' all he's got to do is to take his dinner-pail in his hand and go down theer an' git a job! That's the best news fur manny a day! An' the name o' Donohue will go on rollin' down the ages, sure!

BIDDY, THE BOGIE (*surprised and gratified but mystified*): Think of thot now! (*she catches sight of Billy Barney, the negro minstrel, coming out from the little gate at the basement cautiously as if to elude notice, and leans over to intercept him.*) An' have ye got the rint riddy yit, Misther Barney—it's been owin' this two months sure? (*enter Barney.*)

BARNEY (*visibly shrinking but putting up a bold front, lifts his hat to her gallantly*): So it is, Mrs. Egan, I'd quite forgotten! But I hope to get a job soon. If the managers were n't so jealous of me and bound to keep me down, I'd have had one long ago.

BIDDY, THE BOGIE (*relentlessly*): Yis, but wheer's the rint?

BARNEY (*with the anger of despair*): I'll go and pawn my banjo and GIVE you the money! (*goes in angrily and returns with his banjo, carrying it jauntily as he starts off down the street.*) This is the way they treat ARTISTS† in San Francisco! And this will go "rolling" down the ages, too! (*Goes off haughtily.*)

NEIGHBOR O'NEIL (*looking after him curiously*): Poor devil!

BIDDY THE BOGIE (*haughtily*): I pities thim as belongs to a theayter!

NEIGHBOR O'NEIL (*proudly*): As fur mesilf, I'd ruther be a workin' man! But I must be goin'. (*he returns to his own house.*) Good-day, Misthress Egan.

BIDDY THE BOGIE: Good-day, Misther O'Neil. (*meditatively, leaning on her broom.*) I wunner, I guess not, I dunno, wot is a rollin'-mill? (*she catches sight of her younger sister, Mrs. Spangler, as she comes from market dressed in her best broche shawl and velvet bonnet with a lot of crushed red roses on it with the cotton sticking out from them showing the wear and tear of time. But Mrs. Spangler, being buxom and gay, holds her head proudly. The two sisters always have high words with each other when they meet. Enter Mrs. Spangler.*)

BIDDY, THE BOGIE (*eyeing her sister moodily*): Foine feathers make foine burrds, they say, but it's sorry I am for you, Maggie McGinnis, wearin' yer best bonnet tuh market!

MRS. SPANGLER (*tossing her head and shrugging her shoulders*): If I didn't have one, I couldn't wear it. A leddy must look like a leddy, even wen she goes to market, an' many's the foine gentleman as has taken off his hat to me this mornin'!

BOGIE (*relentlessly*): An' it's a poor mother your son has got this day!

†No tablet is yet placed in memory of the merry-makers of this period who held forth in the old Bush Street Theatre. Nevertheless we sang their songs, we repeated their brilliant sallies of wit, we named our pets after them, we referred to them as authorities. They became as household gods by their elegance, personality and quality. They gave us real wit in those days, clean and free from vulgarity. They soothed us in many an hour of distraction or grief by their merry quips and turns, though they had many sorrows of their own. Foremost among all of these were William Courtright, Charlie Reed, Billy Emerson, Billy Cotton and Carroll Johnson.

MRS. S. (*losing her jauntiness, suddenly*): Biddy! fer the love of Hiven, wot's happened to my boy? Ye know he's the apple of me eye!

THE BOGIE (*opens the door*): Here ye are, Bobby. Yer mither has come. (*Bobby comes out and gives way to his feelings.*)

BOBBY: Well, Mawther, wot d'ye think's bruck loose, now? Here they've gone an' got a new rule fer to get on the force. A man's got to be 26, an' theer's me application in, statin' that me age is 24.

MRS. S. (*throwing her shawl over her head, and sitting down on the steps, and wailing*): O-oh, Bobby! ye'll niver git on, at all, at all!

BOBBY: If I had foive dollars to give Maloney, I cud git it out an' put in another application statin' me age is 26.

MRS. S. (*arousing herself in surprise*): Och, My! Bobby, what a foine head ye've got on ye!

BOBBY: Yes, but wheer's the foive dollars?

MRS. S. (*winking prodigiously*): Ye jist lave it to me. I'll borry it from somebody. (*turns to her sister unctuously*.) Biddy, wouldn't ye be lending' me foive dollars, for Bobby to help him to git on the force?

THE BOGIE (*indignantly*): Och, an' it's sorry I am for ye, Maggie Maginnis! Ye may have been the belle of Antrim County wen ye was back in ould Ireland but it is a poor sowl ye are now, gitten into that rat-hole o' polly ticks! (*lifts her head haughtily*.)

MRS. SPANGLER (*to Bobby*): Niver ye mind, me jewel. I'll borry it from somebody else. (*she goes inside*.)

Bobby stops and blarneys his aunt. She smiles upon him, slips her hand into a capacious pocket in her petticoat and draws out five dollars and gives it to him.

THE BOGIE: Say nothin' to nobuddy an' ye can have it. Not a wurr'd out of ye! Remimber! Now run along an' give it to Misther Maloney.

(*Bobby kisses her and runs along. She looks after him fondly.*)

BOGIE (*emotionally*): He's morr moine than he is hern. Didn't I sing the old songs to him wen he was a babby, wen she was goin' to parties and dancin'? an' a proud day it'll be fer his Aunt Biddy wen she can walk up and down an' see 'im in his foine uniform, standin' on his beat.

MRS. S. (*comes out on the step again*): Where's Bobby?

BOGIE (*gathers up her mops and brooms*): He's gone to see Misther Maloney. (*she goes in proudly.*)

Enter Sister Gertrude. Greeted by Mrs. Spangler, warmly.

SISTER GERTRUDE: I can't stop a minute. I only came to tell you I am back again, and I'm at the Clay Street Hospital, for women. I had a letter from Babe, and she says you have been very kind to her, and I am so glad.

MRS. S.: That's true, Sister Gertrude; but we're all havin' such a hard time oursilves that it's a wonner we can do anything for anny body.

SISTER GERTRUDE: Well, Maggie, you know it's the poor that helps the poor.

MRS. S.: So it is, so it is! She's a rale nice little gell, an' we all like her. An' wot d'ye think, Misther Morton's got a room here now too. He's savin' his money fer to fetch his mother out from the East. He's a foine gentleman an' Miss Lilly and Miss Kate help him to look after the little gell.

SISTER GERTRUDE: How glad I am the poor child has so many friends. You tell her I have come back. Now I must go. (*she turns and sees a stranger. She gives another look and starts, then turns about in the opposite direction, drawing her veil over her face and goes without another word. But she is overcome with emotion.*)

Enter Parson Hager.)

PARSON HAGER (*to Mrs. Spangler*): You have rooms to rent, Madam?

MRS. SPANGLER: That I has, sorr, clane and nate, if I do say so as who should not. (*at this moment, Babe arrives, in tidy clothes, and full of content.*)

BABE: How de do, Mrs. Spangler, an' how's everybody today? I've got a half-holiday, and I'm going to get up a nice lunch for the girls—hot biscuits and apple sauce and fried potatoes and sliced tomatoes. Won't they be surprised, though?

PARSON HAGER (*advancing with arms held out*): Why, Babe, is this you? I've hunted for you every where. Steve made me promise to go and find you, just before he died.

BABE (*thunderstruck*): Parson! You here? (*she stands, hesitating, then buries her head in her arm, like a child, and gives way to suppressed grief.*)

PARSON (*going to her*): What is the matter? Don't you want to see me? I bring you news, sad news.

BABE (*in a low voice*): I have made friends for myself, down here. They would not like me if they knew about my old troubles, and that my mother had married the man—who—killed my father. Promise me you will keep it a secret.

PARSON: I promise! For that is all over, now. Your mother is dead. Her sorrows are no more.

BABE (*sorrowfully*): Poor mother! But I still have to bear the burden. Why! all my good friends would turn away from me if they knew. Why do the innocent have to suffer for the guilty?

PARSON: You are young. How can you understand? But I am old, and I have suffered too. I had a daughter. She ran away with a wicked woman. Her mother's heart was broken and she died. But I still live on—and I suffer.

BABE (*clinging to him*): How glad I am you came! For now we can sympathize with each other. It will be fine for you to have a room here. (*she introduces him to Mrs. Spangler. The three go in.*)

As they go in a figure closely veiled, comes up to the door but hesitates

about ringing the bell. Enter Keyman and Weakling. Mollie Darling comes down the steps to them.)

AL KERCHEVAL (*takes off his hat gracefully*): How are you, Miss Darling? I haven't—seen—you—for—some—time. No,—I—haven't—seen—you.

KEYMAN (*roughly*): Cheese it, Kertch! Don't be callin' her name out like dat! She's on the quiet, now. An' we ain't goin' to give 'er away! Anythin' wanted? Keys or somethin'?

MOLLIE (*in suppressed tones*): Yes. Can you clean a revolver? and put it in good shape? It doesn't go very well. (*she produces a pistol from her hand-bag, and gives it to him. He looks it over critically.*)

KEYMAN: Dat ain't no good. Ye want a better one dan dat. (*she takes out her purse. He scowls.*) No, yer don't! I can git you one. Do you want it fur him?

MOLLIE: Yes. Can you take it to him? The detectives follow me now. I have to keep away! Will you look after him? I'll pay you.

KEYMAN: No, yer don't! He's my fren'! He treats me wite, an' so do you. I'll look after him, all right. Don't you worry. (*Mollie tries to thank him, goes.*) Come on, Ketch. Let's go in. (*they go in by side-entrance.*)

Jim Castleton and Lily White appear, talking in low tones. Castleton looks at his watch.)

CASTLETON: I'll have to go. I have an engagement.

LILY: Is that all you can say to me?

CASTLETON (*nervously*): What else can I say?

LILY: But it is life and death! It is death to me! Oh, what shall I do? You promised! You promised!

CASTLETON (*looking around*): Don't make a scene, for God's sake! I'll get some money and send it to you.

LILY (*wildly*): Money? My heart is breaking, and you talk of money! You promised.

CASTLETON: I've got to go. I can't stay another minute. My mother and sisters are waiting for me to join them, in their box at the matinee. I promised to be there.

LILY (*pressing her hand to her heart*): What are your promises worth? You have no honor.

CASTLETON: There you go! tragic again! I can't stand it. Good-bye. (*he starts to go. She turns after him, trying vainly to keep him.*)

LILY: Jim! Is this the end of everything? Shall I never see you again?

CASTLETON: What's the good of it? You want me to marry you. I know I promised, but I can't do it. My position in society forbids it. My mother would disown me, and cut me off. So there is no use in talking about it. I must go.

(*He hurries away, glad to escape. Lily clings to the railing of the front porch, as she struggles to get control of herself, and goes within, weakly. Biddy the Bogie opens the door, as she enters.*)

BOGIE: Yer not feelin' well, Miss Lily. Wot ye want is a cup o' tay. Ye'll find the little gell gettin' riddy fer you. (*looks at her scrutinizingly as she passes within. Broom in hand, Biddy looks down the street.*)

Enter the two small Gusset boys dragging a big market-basket between them filled with pieces of bread, cooked potatoes, etc., from a restaurant. As they jerk and pull, pieces have fallen out on the street leaving a line behind them.)

DICKIE (*complainingly*): Aw, I'm tired pullin' this!

BILLY: Me, too.

DICKIE (*turning around observes the line of bread*): Jiminy-gosh! look at that?

BILLY: Wot you goina do, Dickie?

DICKIE (*in despair*): I'm tired. I'm gonna sit down and rest! (*sits in one side of the basket.*)

BILLY: I'm tired, too. Lemme sit down.

DICKIE: No, I'm the biggest.

BILLY: I'm the littlest!

DICKIE: Gimme—there now! (*they tussle, pulling at the basket till it is overturned.*)

(Enter Morton on a rush, but stops suddenly.)

MORTON: Hello, you little scamps! what's this? I've been wondering where all this good bread came from. Say, Dick, why don't you pick it up again. Don't you know it is wicked to throw bread around?

(Enter Mrs. Gusset with large bundle of sewing under her arm.)

MRS. GUSSET (*shrinking back*): Oh, children, how can you mortify me so? Help me to pick it up. (*she stoops to do this when little Kree, the lame girl, comes out from within and helps her, instead of the boys.*)

DICKIE (*carefully explaining*): Well, the restaurant man filled the basket too full and Billy wiggled his side so't it dropped out—

BILLY: I never did! it was your side!

DICKIE: He wouldn't go back and pick it up nuther w'd I (*airily*). Ye don't ketch me pickin' up bread out o' the streets!

(Mrs. Gusset takes up the basket and runs in with it.)

LITTLE LAME KREE (*disapprovingly*): You bad, bad things! isn't she the best mother in the world to stay and take care of us since pa went off and left us? and don't she work till her back is most broke? O, you mean things! Come in and be ashamed o' yourselves. (*Kree grabs each by the hand and drags them in. As they are doing this, enters Barney, the negro-minstrel, banjo in hand. The Bogie fetches down her broom and sweeps up the remnants, meanwhile eyeing him carefully. Barney lifts his hat to her gallantly. He and Morton exchange greetings cordially.*)

MORTON (*to Barney*): Isn't it terrible how that poor woman keeps those young ones alive?

BARNEY (*striking his banjo*): Isn't it terrible how any of us keep alive? (*looks at Bogie, significantly.*) Just saved my banjo from being

pawned to pay my rent to Mrs. Egan, here! Yes, sir, got a new job (*voice breaks*). Old man, congratulate me! I feel as if I were a boy again! (*Bogie scrutinizes him to see if he is fooling.*)

MORTON (*extending his hand*): Well, I do congratulate you, Barney, how could society get along without you to amuse them? A fair exchange is no robbery. Music is money—you have some of the former to exchange for some of the latter, you sing for your supper like little Tommy Tucker, of course. Going to give the great public "Flewy-flewy" for the eleventh hundred and second time—your great masterpiece?

BARNEY: Yes, and I'm going to give them something new, too. (*tunes his banjo and sings:*)

"The next that came was a little green snake—ahm—
The next that came was a little green snake,
And he crawled around the wedding cake—ahm—"

MORTON: Why, man! that's as old as the hills!

BARNEY (*cheerfully*): That's the very reason they'll like it—it's so old that they'll think it is new again.

MORTON: Good for you—and say, I've got good luck, too. My family back East has won a great lawsuit. And what do you think I am going to do, Mrs. Egan? You can't guess. I'm going to pack my trunk and go back East tomorrow morning. Early train. (*the two men shake hands. Morton puts his hand in his pocket and takes out some silver.*) Here, Barney, take this in and give it to that poor woman. I'm a hard-hearted wretch—but I can't stand this (*pointing to the bread on the street*).

BARNEY: Same here. I'll put a dollar to it. (*goes in drumming on his banjo, singing next verse:*)

"The next that came were two little bugs—ahm—
The next that came were two little bugs,
And they set on the cider jugs—ahm—"

BOGIE (*doubtfully, leaning on her broom like an old witch*): Is it the thruth, or arr ye foolin' me, the both of yees?

MORTON (*holding up his hand*): It's the truth!

BOGIE (*affected to tears*): Och, Misther Morton! An' ye'll be lavin' us?

MORTON: Yes. And I want you to help me. I had a telegram that that old lawsuit had been compromised, and I am to go and fetch my mother out. Mighty good luck for our folks it came before we were all dead. Now, will you let me leave my traps here till I come back?

BIDDY: Av coarse. The byes is here, and they can carry them up to the attic fur ye. But wot'll the little gell be doin' 'ithout ye? I'm thinkin' she'll take it hard!

MORTON: Oh, I'll be back soon, and I'm going to get my mother to look out for Babe. I'm almost sure she'll do it. Now let us go and see about those traps of mine, for I've got lots to do to get away by the early morning train.

BIDDY: Yis, Misther Morton, I'm a comin'. (*both go within. Enter Malcolm.*)

MALCOLM (*gleefully*): Won't my sister be pleased when I tell her the great news that I've got a raise of a whole dollar a week? (*he goes within.*)

(End of First Scene of Act III.)

SCENE II.

(*Afternoon, clouding up, dull and dark.*

Room in Mrs. Spangler's rooming-house, where the three girls, Lily, Kate and Babe, have their co-operative home together. A table, a couch, what-not in the corner, with sea shells and books—pictures of Washington and of Grant's family on the walls. Small side-room indicated by door.

Babe has set table, and then gives way to melancholy. Sits down with back to door of entrance leading from hall.)

BABE: I wonder if anything good will ever happen to me? if I can ever forget my sorrows? (*buries her head in her arm for an instant, then lifts her head and wipes her eyes roughly.*) Oh! I've got to make the best of everything. I ought to be thankful that I earn four dollars a week and that I have such kind friends. (*In her abstraction she does not notice that some one had opened the door softly, and is stealing toward her. It is Malcolm, who plans to take his sister by surprise, thinking it is Kate sitting there. He cautiously advances and puts his hand over her eyes.*)

BABE: Oh! Who's that? Is that you, Kate? No, your hands are smaller than these! (*feels the hands.*)

MALCOLM (*horrified at taking such a liberty with a strange girl*): What! Have I made a mistake? How can I get out of here? (*looks at the door warily. Makes a dash for the door and goes clattering down the stairs.*)

BABE (*jumping to her feet*): Why, it's Kate's brother. He took me for Kate. (*laughs merrily. Enter Morton.*)

MORTON: What's the matter? You seem very merry! Wasn't that Malcolm, running away?

BABE (*still laughing*): Yes. He took me for Kate and put his hands over my eyes and when he found out who it was, he ran away as fast as he could! To think of me nearly scaring a young man to death!

MORTON (*briefly*): I'm going to leave in the morning. Going East, to fetch my mother out here. Had a telegram. That lawsuit's been won. I am to fetch her to California! So I shall not see you for a little while.

BABE (*ready to cry*): Oh! You are going away! Suppose you never come back?

MORTON: Never fear. I love California too well. I'll never live anywhere else. So, you will see me soon. Be a good child, and just keep out of trouble till I get back, and may be I can get my mother to be a

mother to you. That's what you need more than anything else, Babe, and to go to school.

BABE (*solemnly*): I know it.

MORTON (*letting his voice fall*): And by the way, Babe, I heard something about—you know, Steve—I don't like to speak about it, because it only makes you think about sorrowful things—but a detective told me that they're on the trail of the stage-robber—it seems he came down on the boat the very morning after. My! but he was a sharp fellow!

BABE (*wonderingly*): He did? Why, that was the boat I came on, don't you remember?

MORTON: So it was! Well, they're going to get him pretty soon, now.

BABE (*grimly*): And—I—hope—he'll—be—hanged! My poor darling old Steve! What would I have done, if it had not been for Mr. Belmour and you? He gave me money but you found me WORK to do.

MORTON: You poor little thing, you—I hope now to show you what I can do—to make things better.

(*Biddy Egan appears. She comes into the room with the Keyman and Al Kercheval behind her, carrying a trunk between them, and with their arms full of bundles and books. They set the trunk down and the other things slip from their arms and fall upon the floor, while the two fellows scramble awkwardly to pick them up again.*)

BOGIE (*with authority*): Here's the byes, Misther Morton, wid the thraps. Will ye go along an' show us ware yo'd like 'um to be putt?

(*In the tussle with one of the bundles, it breaks open and a bright flash of steel in the shape of a revolver shows itself. The Keyman falls upon it immediately and gives a surreptitious glance around. No one has perceived it. He whisks it into his pocket like lightning and draws out a cigarette which he leisurely puts between his teeth and asks Kerch for a match, to cover up his action. Scolding them both, and forbidding the lighting of the cigarette till he leaves the attic, the Bogie gathers up the scattered contents of the bundle, ties it together and carries it out herself.*)

MORTON: Thank you, Mrs. Egan, I'm much obliged.

(*As Morton and the boys and the Bogie are leaving, Kate comes. Her face is set and white. Morton touches his hat to her as he passes and so does Kercheval. Babe stands in doubt. She realizes that something has gone wrong. Kate throws herself into a chair by the table and buries her face in her hands.*)

BABE (*bewildered*): Why, Kate! is something the matter?

KATE (*briefly*): Nothing much. Lost my job, that's all. Malcolm will have to give up business college.

(*Enter Lily from side-room, very pale and listless. Sits down, saying nothing.*)

BABE (*to Kate*): How could you lose your job? Why, you have

the very highest influence down there! And it's a Government position to be working in the land office.

KATE (*sullenly*): I know. But I resigned

BABE AND LILY (*together*): RESIGNED?

KATE: Yes. To escape the attentions of a man I detest. For three months he has been trying to get me to go to a French dinner with him. And I said "No." So, today he said: "Well, you know what you can do, don't you, Miss Strong?" And I said: "Yes, I can resign." He is a married man.

BABE: But, what will you do?

KATE: Oh! Buy guns and pistols and poisons and cannons I suppose, and put an end to myself! I thought I was so smart, and so independent! But I'm not! I'm just as weak as all the other women are. I begin to envy the women who have a husband, home and children to work for; for then you have a roof over your head; and a woman can't get along without a roof. That's certain! I'll have to go and tell Malcolm.

BABE: He was here to see you; but somehow, I scared him away, and he ran down the stairs when he saw that you were not here and that I was!

KATE (*wearily*): Yes, that's just like him! He'll have to get over all that nonsense now. I must go down to Cluff's and tell him. (*Kate goes.*)

BABE: Do you know, Lily, I think Kate is giving in! I believe that if Mr. Harrington asked her to marry him now, she would do it! What a pity he does not know! Do you think it would be wrong if I should send him a note?

LILY (*listlessly*): What could you say? Men do not care if women suffer.

BABE: Why, Lily, what is the matter with you? Of course a good man cares, and Mr. Harrington is a good man. Now I could write something like this (*begins to write*): Mr. Harrington: Dear Sir (*she hesitates*): My friend, Miss Kate Strong, has resigned her position in the land office. (*So far, so good.*) And I think she would like to get another position as soon as possible. She went to see her brother, who is on Second street at Cluff's grocery store, to tell him the sad news. You could find her there. I am sending this to you— How am I going to send it, Lily?

LILY (*bitterly*): Oh, I'm sure I don't know;—do you think you should send it?

BABE: Why not? I'm not a 'fraid cat! I hear Bobby Spangler talking. He might take it. (*she runs to the door.*) Bobby, is that you? Come here! Do you want to do a favor for me?

BOBBY (*enters slowly and cautiously*): Wot it is?

BABE: Why, it is a letter! and I want you to deliver it at the Occidental Hotel, to a gentleman there, Mr. William Harrington.

BOBBY: Has he got the inflooence wid the bosses?

BABE: Of course he has. And he'll be so pleased to get this letter, that you can ask him to help you get on the force. I'll put it in the letter (*repeats*). I am sending this to you by Robert Spangler, who has been trying to get on the force for years, but he has no influence with the bosses. May be you could tell him what to do next. Very truly yours, Miss B. Robinson. Now, Bobby, here is the chance of your life. You just go for him. He is there, somewhere, and you find him. (*puts note in envelope, addresses and hands it over*) Don't you drop it in the street and get it muddy! and don't mash it up in your great big paws. Put it in your hat, and then you'll know where it is. Now rush! (*he does as she says, awkwardly*.)

BOBBY (*full of determination, draws down his brows and assumes a most important air, delays an instant*): Do you think he knows Mr. Maloney?

BABE: Mr. Maloney? Why, of course he does. Hurry up, you slow poke! (*Bobby goes. She runs to the window to look after him, and bursts out laughing.*) Oh, Lily! You ought to come and see him. That's the very first time in his life he ever hurried! Oh, he has jumped on the car. If he doesn't find Mr. Harrington nobody ever will.

LILY (*listlessly*): He won't care—Mr. Harrington won't care.

BABE: What is the matter with you, Lily?

LILY: Oh, nothing. (*she sighs.*)

BABE: Do cheer up, Lily, you give me the blues. Here comes the Bogie. I'm going to have some fun with her.

(*Enter the Bogie, with mops and brooms and dusters.*)

BOGIE: Oi've come to finish the room, gells. Ye can't wash the windies whin the sun is shinin' on 'um. So I will jist do it now. (*begins to work.*)

BABE (*to Lily*): Now, watch the Bogie! I'm going to astonish her. (*very demurely.*) Have you heard the great news? Kate is going to be married. (*she adds*) Maybe.

BOGIE: Och, poor thing!

BABE (*indignantly*): Don't you be calling her "a poor thing."

BOGIE (*with eyes lifted up to Heaven*): Oi've been married mesilf an' doan't Oi know?

BABE (*wickedly*): Why don't you get married again?

BOGIE (*with arms folded*): None o' that now! Married agin, is it? Noa, noa, indade. Oi'm better off as Oi am. Whin Oi arns me dollar fer washin' Oi kin go home an' know that no man kin take it away from me. Noa, noa, indade!

BABE (*curiously scanning her over*): Say, you've had a tough time ever since you were born, haven't you?

BOGIE: Yes, Miss, look at me honds! They is full of holes from washin' an' scrubbin'.

BABE: Don't you think you would have been better off if you had never been born?

BOGIE: That Oi belaves, but now that Oi'm here Oi wants to kape on livin'.

BABE: What! And work as hard as you have done for another (*she hesitates*) fifty years?

BOGIE (*proudly*): Foarty-five, Miss, foarty-five! That Oi wud aven a hundred, now Oi'm here. Oi will work an' do wot Oi kin, as long as God gives me the stringth, an' thin whin Oi'm too wake to do anny more, the payples'll see that Oi'm keered for.

BABE (*astonished at the Bogie's faith*): What! Do you believe that people are as good as all that? Listen to that, Lily?

BOGIE: Oi do, Oi do, Oi belaves that the most av payples has good hearts that will never see an honest wurkin' man or wummin go hungry for bread, if they knows it. (*changing her tone to indignation*) But if they is lazy thin they'd ought to go widout anythin'.

BABE (*earnestly, looking at the Bogie intently, with head propped up by hands, elbows on the table*): And so—you believe—that if—a person tries—to be honest and good—they will—come out—all right—in the end?

BOGIE: Oi do. Oi belaves it. An' that payples has good hearts. (*she hobbles out for a duster.*)

LILY: How could you tell her that Kate was going to be married?

BABE: Well, it might happen just by contraries! Who knows? Lots of mysterious things happen. Come on, Lily, let us eat our lunch and clear up these dishes and get them out of the way.

LILY: I don't want anything.

BABE: You might pretend that you do, just to please me. Come on now, be a good child, and "do as you are bid"—that was in my primer. Don't you remember that?

LILY (*slowly*): I don't think I had the same primer that you had, Babe. (*she smiles faintly and sits down and tries to pretend that she wants something to eat.*)

BABE (*cheerfully*): That's it! I thought I could coax you. It's a pity to waste a nice lunch like this. Don't you think so, Lily?

(*As Lily nods in reply, the curtain goes down for one minute. When it rises the dishes are cleared away, and the two girls having changed positions sit at the table busy with darning and mending. But while Babe is trying to darn a stocking, Lily lets her sewing lie in her lap idly, she being in a state of abstraction. Not a word is spoken. Occasionally a faint wail is heard from the far distance, as of a disconsolate dog baying, but it is very softened and subdued at first. Some one comes and stands at the door which is ajar. It is Malcolm. Enter Malcolm, holding a bunch of violets in one hand and a fancy-box in the other hand, awkwardly.*)

MALCOLM (*bows and removes his hat, and speaks precisely to cover up his embarrassment*): How do you do, Miss White? Kate sent me with a message. (*ignores Babe, who looks at him inquiringly, with pursed-up mouth at being left out so utterly.*)

LILY (*surprised*): A message?

MALCOLM (*still embarrassed*): Yes, my sister says (*takes a fresh breath and begins over again*)—my sister says she won't be here tonight. She's going to stay with Miss Harrington for a while. She's got a position as Miss Harrington's private secretary and is going traveling with her.

BABE: What?

MALCOLM (*still embarrassed*): Yes! Yes! And she's going to be married!

BABE: Wha—a—at!

MALCOLM: Yes, yes! And she says she's going to invite everybody to the wedding!

BABE: Glory—all of us?

MALCOLM: Yes, everybody, and you too, I mean. And you more than anybody else in the world, and Mr. Harrington sent you these flowers, and this box of candy; and they say they owe all their happiness to you. (*hands them over.*)

BABE (*holding bouquet in one hand and box in the other, full of surprise, looking from one to the other*): Do you hear that, Lily? Wake up! You said men do not care if women suffer! and here is your answer. They do care. Don't they, Malcolm? You'd care if I suffered, wouldn't you?

MALCOLM (*forgetting his shyness*): Well, I rather think I would! And if anybody ever makes you suffer, just you let me know, and I'll punch him between the eyes.

LILY (*looks at him pitifully*): You are a good boy, Malcolm. I wish you were my brother. I need a brother very much.

MALCOLM (*at his ease*): All right! You can adopt me, if you like.

(Enter Barney, the negro-minstrel, banjo in hand.)

BARNEY (*eagerly*): Do you want to hear my new song? Expect to make a hit with it.

BABE: Why, of course we do. And maybe it will cheer Lily up a little.

BARNEY: Thank you. I need somebody to practice on, you know. (*thrums.*)

MALCOLM: Go ahead. I'd like to hear it. (*Barney begins.*)

BARNEY:

"A frog went a courting, he did ride—a hm—
A frog went a courting, he did ride
With a sword and a pistol at his side—a hm—
He rode till he came to the lady mouse's hall—a hum—
He rode till he came to the lady mouse's hall,
And there he stopped,
And he loud did call—a hum——"

(In response to the fascinating picking of the banjo and the weird

cadence of the song, comes first the Bogie, whom Babe motions to a chair. Next comes Mrs. Spangler. Then Morton, who is much amused.)

BABE (*cheerfully*): Poor Mr. Barney is going to practice on us. So listen and help him out. (*all join in the refrain "a hm."*)

BARNEY:

He said, "Lady mouse, are you within?"—a hm—
 He said, "Lady mouse, are you within?"
 "Oh, yes, kind sir. I sit and spin"—a hm—
 He took Lady mouse upon his knee—a hm—
 He took Lady mouse upon his knee,
 And said, "Lady mouse, will you marry me?"—a hm —
 Lady mouse blushed and hung her head—a hm—
 Lady mouse blushed and hung her head,
 "You must ask my Uncle Rat," she said—a hm—
 Uncle Rat laughed and shook his fat sides—a hm—
 Uncle Rat laughed and shook his fat sides.
 And he said, "Lady mouse shall be your bride"—a hm—

(*Next come the Keyman and Kercheval, who sit on the floor. Neighbor O'Neil ventures in and listens, also Dickie and Billy peep in the door. Babe waves them in to sit down beside the Keyman. Last of all appears Bobby Spangler, throwing his hat up in the air and trying to catch it on his head. He is gay and yet self-contained. He is posing as if in a pantomime, drawing attention to himself. One by one each draws attention to the other regarding his actions. They know something is going to happen. He begins to dance a jig all of his own to the thrumming of the banjo, and the cadence of the refrain. Without stopping, he meanders to where Biddy the Bogie is sitting, and grabs her out of her chair and waltzes her around the room, in and out and around amid the mops and pails upon the floor, to which she lends herself, for she is a natural-born dancer, yet meanwhile pretending to object to his being such "a gleegen." He won't let her go, and the others take up the refrain and clap "juba," as never stopping he goes to his mother and gives her his other hand and then begins dancing them both, one with each arm. This is in imitation of the style in vogue at the Grand Opera House on Mission street, where Bonfanti and Sangalli are holding high revel with the Maestro of the Ballet. The Bogie is the first to come to her senses and she tries to draw away.)*

BIDDY THE BOGIE: What d'ye want to be such "a gleegen" fur! Yer always "on a killarach!" Let me go! (*she pulls away from him and Mrs. Spangler recovers her dignity also and reprimands him. At this, left partnerless and alone, Bobby executes a pas seul; holding up imaginary ballet-skirts, he makes a grand pirouette, and stands in the center of the room.*)

BOBBY: Wot d'ye think! I'm "on the foorce!" As luck would have it, Maloney was right there, an' Miss Kate's young man jist spoke to him, dat's all! an' I'm "on"—I'm goin' on tonight. (*they all indulge in a grand hand-clapping. Mrs. Spangler runs to him and embraces him. On the floor, amid the mops and pails, crouches Biddy the Bogie, with her apron over her head, and she is sobbing, convulsively. She can stand bad*

luck, but good luck is more than she can bear. Bobby runs to her and gets down on the floor with her.)

Bobby: Sure, I'd never lived to grow up. Aunt Biddy, if it hadn't been fur you! Manny's the time you've gone hungry so I'd be fat an' sassy. Ye've been a mither to me, ye've give manny a foive-dollar-piece to pay the bosses! an' sure I'm goin' to look out fur ye from now on. Ye shan't worrk so hard, fer now I'll be havin' a hunderd a month.

(*Biddy the Bogie takes her apron off her head and stands admiringly gazing at her nephew, saying*): "He's morre mine than he's hern. Ain't he jist said I was a mither to'm? (*weeps for pure joy*.)

Bobby begins to shake hands with every one. Comes to Keyman.)

Bobby: It was you done it, Hennery! It was you got me "onto the foorce!"

KEYMAN: Naw! (*growls, as if to show he is impervious to flattery. Points to Kercheval.*) 'Twas Kertch done it. He interdooced ye to Maloney. (*Bobby looks bewildered. Shakes Kertch by the hand.*)

MALCOLM: Say! You fellows! It seems to me as if this young lady had something to do with it. She wrote the letter, didn't she?

MRS. SPANGLER (*overflowing with feeling*): Sure! little gell, it was you as got 'im on the force.

MORTON: We all tried our best, but it was Babe, after all! (*he shakes hands with her, and everybody congratulates her on her success. Bogie gathers up her traps and goes out. Mrs. Spangler and Bobby, Kertch and Keyman, all go. Morton and Malcolm last. Sound of the fog-horn is heard in between times growing louder and more distinct.*)

BABE (*goes and looks out of the window*): Oh, the fog is coming in. I think we'd better have the fire made. I'll go and get some kindling. (*goes.*)

Lily gets up and tries to stand. She wrings her hands. Puts her hands over her eyes. Sobs. Sighs.)

LILY: What am I going to do? I don't know!

(*Babe returns, with Bogie carrying a hod of coal. Babe is carrying a salver containing a tea-pot and some sandwiches and cake.*)

BABE (*cheerfully*): Mrs. Spangler's a good soul. She sent this up for our supper, Lily, and I'm glad of it. Now, we can eat our candy in peace. Won't you have one, Aunt Biddy? And you can smell my violets, too.

(*While they are talking Lily gives way to her despair. The Bogie takes notice.*)

BOGIE: Och, indade, Miss Lily! You'll be havin' a chill. Hurry an' git a drink of the tay, t'll do ye good, Miss. (*Babe pours it out. And one cup for the Bogie and one for herself. Fire blazes up. Fog-horn is heard again. Babe passes box of sweets to Lily; but she waves it away. Bogie takes notice.*)

BOGIE: Indade, Miss Lily, an' Oi'll be in here wid a pail o' hot wather and some mustard fur ye to put yer futs in, before ye go to bed this night!

LILY: But there's nothing the matter,—only that old fog-horn. It sounds so melancholy, as if the end of the world had come.

BABE (*mischievously to Bogie*): Now, I suppose you will be wanting to go out there, somewhere, and get at that old fog-horn, and hush it up just 'cause it worries Lily. It would be just like you!

BOGIE (*earnestly*): An' why not, thin? Wasn't Oi a young gell mesilf onct, and didn't everything be a throuble to me? It's sorry I am fer ye, ye pore young sowl's gittin' in luve an' all that? Now, if she's no betther ye must let me know an' Oi'll be a mither to hur! (*starts to go. Babe runs after her, puts her arms around her, and gives her a good hug. Bogie goes.*)

BABE (*returns to fire and warms her hands*): Well, it is nice to think of Kate being so happy. She deserves it. Those who are honest and good, ought to have a happy end to their lives. But they don't, always.

(*Lily shivers, and covers her face with her hands.*)

BABE (*continuing*): This is a tough old world, Lily, isn't it? A whole family may be respected and be nice for generations; but just let one black sheep of a woman be among them, and she can pull the whole of them down together, and the poor unfortunate generations ahead of them, even. It's the old story! The innocent for the guilty.

LILY (*startled*): Why, Babe! What do you mean?

BABE: Well, I'm just thinking what an awful serious thing it is to be born a woman. If she does wrong, her shame can never die out. It lives on and on, and all her kith and kin have to suffer for her wrongdoing. It doesn't seem right that they who are good and honest should have to bear the shame, does it, Lily? (*listlessly Babe turns her gaze upon her companion's face. Suddenly she feels herself drawn, as by a spell. Lily's eyes are fixed upon her with a horror that tells of a secret agony within, struggling for utterance.*)

BABE (*whispers*): Why, Lily! How you frighten me! What is it?

LILY (*regaining self-command. Fog-horn wails*): Nonsense! I tell you, it is that awful sound! and you go on talking about such horrid things that I've got a regular fit of the blues. (*she covers her face with her hands while Babe begs her forgiveness, and tries to be more cheerful.*)

BABE: It is getting late. I guess we'd better make up the bed-lounge, and find out how we two are going to get along together, now that Kate is gone. You know, she was our main-stay. (*goes to bed-lounge, opens it, and begins to prepare for retiring.*) Perhaps sleep will make us forget our troubles, and then we'll wake up all bright and happy in the morning. (*spoken joyously.*)

Lily puts her head on the table and begins to sob. Babe runs to her to comfort her.)

LILY: I shall never, never, never wake up bright and happy in the morning again. (*Babe comforts her. After a pause.*) I'm in great trouble, Babe, great trouble. I don't believe any one can help me.

BABE: I will help you. You can trust me. Don't I know what trouble is?

LILY: But never such trouble as mine.

BABE: Oh, don't say that! You make me think it is something terrible!

LILY: Well, it is terrible. Come close. Let me whisper. (*Babe puts her ear for the confession.*)

BABE (*drawing away in horror*): Not that! Not that! You had only one thing in the world worth having, and that was your good name. And now you have lost that? Oh my! Oh my! (*Lily wails in her deep despair, and Babe joins her. They weep together.*)

(End of Scene Two.)

SCENE III.

(*Scene outside the door in the hall. Morton is passing. He stops and is bewildered. Presently the Bogie comes in, in her big frilled nightcap and thick petticoat and short jacket, with pail in hand.*)

MORTON: Mrs. Egan! Please won't you go in and see what is the matter. Something must be wrong.

BIDDY: That Oi will, Mr. Morton! You know gells will be gells. Oi've me pail o' hot wather, all riddy, fur Oi'm thinkin' Miss Lily's got a chill.

MORTON: Do hurry, and let me know if I can be of any use.

BIDDY: That Oi will, sure! (*she goes in. Presently a worse wail goes up, like the voice of a banshee. It is the Bogie joining the other two.*)

MORTON (*apprehensively*): Great Heavens! What can be going on in there? I hope nothing has happened to poor little Babe! (*Enter the Bogie.*)

THE BOGIE (*in powerful stage whispers, placing her hand on Morton's shoulder*): Pore sowl! (*she weeps again.*)

MORTON (*entreatingly*): Who is a poor soul? Not Babe?

BOGIE: Go 'long wid ye! Av coarse not. The swate childer! But she wants to help the ither wan. An' Oi'm goin' tuh help all Oi kin! (*voice breaks.*)

MORTON (*anxiously*): What can I do?

BOGIE: Misther Morton, cud ye git worrd tuh Sister Gertrude the night? Thot pore Lily! (*cries again*) She's bin betrayed by a villyun—he promussed to marry her.

MORTON (*enraged*): The hound! He ought to be killed!

BOGIE: He tould her her culdn't kape his worrd 'cause his folks was in Serciety.

MORTON: He shall answer to me, the cur!

THE BOGIE: Och, Misther Morton, she says she doesn't want to live! She hopes she'll die—an' Oi'm afeard she will—she's thot wake and faint, like she has no stringht left in her.

MORTON (*strangely affected*): Mrs. Egan, promise me to take good care of Babe while I am away. I'll stay over a day and help you—help

you all I can. Now, I'll go for Sister Gertrude. (*Morton goes. Wails of fog-horn and voices commingled.*)

(End of Third Scene.)

SCENE IV.

(*Small alley near Tehama and Fourth streets. Fog-horn heard at intervals. A high board-fence with door cut in, as if it were once an old carpenter-shop. Boarded up and abandoned. Children walking up and down and playing games and quarreling. Mollie Darling passes by quickly. Two detectives are slowly following her. She catches sight of them and hastens away. Schlosser, the keyman, meets them. He gives no sign, nor does Mollie. Schlosser goes on to the end of the alley-way, and then retraces his steps. That door in the fence has a fascination for him. Finally he gives a signal and tattoo at the door. Some one responds. A bolt is drawn.*)

KEYMAN: It's me, Henry! I got it! Here it is, and a pretty fine shooter, too. I found it.

BELMOUR: That's good. Thank you, Henry.

KEYMAN: Now, if only I kin git the money, ye kin sure git away. I'm keepin' on tryin', an' thin ye kin go off on the China steamer, fer yer health.

BELMOUR: Too good to be true. How's Mollie? (*his face shows white and tense.*)

KEYMAN: She's a leadin' them fellers a merry chase. That's what! but she's got enough for one ticket, almost.

(*Measured step is heard on the wooden side-walk. It is slow and steady, as if the new-comer has all the time in the world at his disposal. It is the majestic footfall of the law.*)

KEYMAN (*whispering*): It is a cop. Never knowed one down here before. (*he clings to the wall, trying to make himself as flat as possible. The steps come very near, then the guardian of the peace turns about leisurely and walks back again, head up, eye straight forward. As the policeman reaches the corner and goes around, the Keyman breathes freely once more.*)

KEYMAN: That's a close call! Guess I'll make a sneak.

BELMOUR: Good night.

KEYMAN: Same to you. (*Belmour draws the bolt.*)

As the Keyman ventures up to the corner and rounds it, he finds himself caught in the arms of a mighty policeman. He tries to shrink out of the clutch of the man until he hears a guffaw bursting from the burly form of him, and recognizes him as Bobby Spangler.)

SPANGLER: I t'ought I'd skeer yous. I knowed it was you goin' down there. Ha! Ha!

KEYMAN (*faintly*): I knowed it was you, too. Ha! Ha!

SPANGLER (*indifferently*): What was ye after? (*And then in a clumsy attempt to be satirical.*) Was it the big reward of the Wells

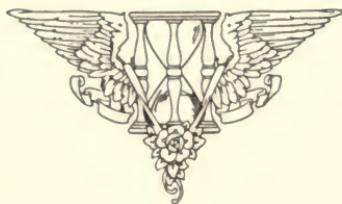
Fargo fur that stage-robber, up there somewhere? Sloss! We'd do a fine thing, if we cud git that! My! but it wud set us up in business fur they've made it five thousand, now, so Maloney says.

KEYMAN (*trying to conceal his feelings of astonishment*): Ha! Ha! (*He looks up into the face of Spangler with a furtive expression, as sinister emotions begin to surge through him.*) But what did the poor devil ever do to us?

SPANGLER: Nawthin. Only somebody's goin' to git it, and it might as well be us! But this is the end of my beat, and I must go back. (*slaps Keyman on the back.*) Little did we think wen we was goin' to the Rincon School, that we'd be walking along like this, talkin' about gittin' rich all at onct. Good-bye. (*turns back.*)

KEYMAN: So long! See yer termorrer! (*makes a peculiar contortion, wrestling with the temptation, suddenly thrust upon him.*) It's him! He's a stage-robber, an' he's kilt the stage-driver! Five thousand dollars! (*to himself, violently, as if catching hold of another person than himself. Beats himself on the breast.*) No! ye don't! Not wile I'm here! He's been wite to me. He's my fren'! (*shambles off. Wail of fog-horn.*)

(End of Fourth Scene of Third Act.)



ACT IV.—Scene I.

(Nob Hill, California street, near Taylor. Exterior of Miss Harrington's mansion. Carpet spread with canopy over from entrance to the edge of the sidewalk showing that slippers feet are to pass that way. The marriage at the church is over, and wedding-guests and bridal-party are returning home for the reception. Poor people are gathering to gaze on the scene. A policeman comes and amiably directs them to stand on each side instead of blocking the way. Among the poor people are a Young Woman, a Child, an Old Woman, and an Old Man. These make comments on the wedding-guests as they arrive.)

CHILD (clapping her hands): Oh, there she comes. Ain't she a pretty bride, though?

YOUNG WOMAN: And see the groom! He's handsome, too.

OLD WOMAN: Well, they've got my good wishes! for she deserves all the luck in the world, for she had to work for her livin'! An' she was good to her brother, too.

(Bride and groom pass by while bursts of music of Mendelssohn's Wedding March come from within. Miss Harrington follows with Malcolm as escort.)

OLD MAN (indifferently, as if he did not care either way, only speaks to show that he knows a thing or two, himself): An' who's the proud dame that has the "Silver threads among the gold?"

OLD WOMAN (warningly): Hush, she'll hear you! That's Miss Harrington, one of the leaders of Society. She does lots of things for poor folks.

OLD MAN (drawlingly): Wall, I wish—she'd—do—something—for us.

OLD WOMAN (warningly): Hush! That isn't polite!

(Door is wide open. Music continues. Murray, the butler, stands stately and grand, directing guests. Maids lead the way. Dr. Kercheval of Sacramento, Captain Emmons and wife pass by and go within.)

OLD MAN: There's style for you. Regular 'ristocrats I call 'em.

(Morton and his mother appear. Mrs. Morton is very elegantly attired in brocaded silk and ermine cloak, with hair in white puffs over her head.)

YOUNG WOMAN: My! What beautiful white hair! She looks like a duchess.

OLD MAN (familiarly): Oh, I know him. Why, that's Morton, the newspaper man. He's just come into a fortune.

(Passing by are Miss Marie Castleton with her sisters, Lina and Jenny, accompanied by escorts, while Mrs. Castleton is being escorted by her son, Jim Castleton.)

YOUNG WOMAN: My! But them girls have a good time! They're always havin' routs and balls and horse-back parties an' silk dresses an' everything they want.

OLD MAN (*in high-keyed voice*): Wall, that young feller's no good. I don't take no stock in him.

OLD WOMAN: No, nor I. Did you see how poor Lily White was buried the other day? Poor thing! He promised to marry her, but he said he couldn't keep his word, 'cause his folks was in Society. An' she died of a broken heart.

YOUNG WOMAN: You don't say? Isn't that just too pitiful?

OLD WOMAN: Yes. And if she hadn't had some good friends at the last, she'd a been buried in the Potter's Field.

YOUNG WOMAN: Mercy, mercy me!

OLD WOMAN: Yes, and her baby's in the Infant Shelter! and a rich lady has adopted it! It's one of the most beautiful little things you ever saw in your life.

YOUNG WOMAN: You don't say so?

OLD MAN: Quit yer talkin'. 'Taint proper. But who's this a-comin'? Some queer folks fur a weddin' like this. Ain't they?

(Appears a motley group at this moment in irregular marching order. Mrs. Spangler is in a tawdry red velvet gown trimmed with gold lace like a theatrical queen. In a dress suit is her son, Bobby Spangler. In her sister's broche shawl and best velvet bonnet hobbles along the Bogie muttering to herself like a witch that has lost her way. Then follow Mr. O'Neil and Barney faultlessly gotten up, and walking together.)

YOUNG WOMAN: Oh, that must be the nurse of the bride when she was a baby and she's invited the whole raft of them! You can see that easy enough.

OLD WOMAN: No, it ain't; That's Mrs. Spangler, and she used to be the bride's landlady. And I think it was very nice of the bride to invite her old friends to the weddin' even if they are poor.

OLD MAN: What air you a talkin' about? Why, that's O'Neil, the workin' man! He collects rents all over town. An' the other! Why, he's Barney, the nigger-minstrel, and he's "some punkins" I kin tell you! Even the 'ristocrats pay their good money to hear him sing "Flewy-flewy." He's a great man, he is!

(Next come Mrs. Gusset and Kree and Dickie and Billy, the latter two pointing their fingers, and Kree trying to keep them from doing so. Next follows Parson Hager with a young lady on his arm. She is in a gown of green satin with terra-cotta ruffles, very elaborated and Frenchified, with angel sleeves and long train. The waist is very tightly laced in. This creation from Paris has lain in the bottom of a trunk for twenty-five years. The owner was in mourning when it arrived and it went out of style so quickly that she could never wear it. After many years this trunk was passed on to a dealer in second-hand clothes. Mrs. Spangler having chosen a red velvet gown for herself, advises the child to try on this creation. It fits her to perfection and it is brand-new.)

"Leddies allus wears trails to weddin's," urges the good-hearted Irish woman. So the bargain is made and thus they are arrayed for this grand occasion. Inside this wonderful green satin and terra-cotta combination is Babe Robinson, ill at ease and uncomfortable—a child masquerading as a young lady in grotesquerie.)

YOUNG WOMAN (*slightly surprised*): My! don't that one look queer?

OLD WOMAN: She's a nice little gal just the same, even if she is fixed up too much.

OLD MAN: And them! What's them? Wall, by gum, if it ain't the Keyman an' his chump!

(Following closely come the last of this motley group, two young men in full dress suits. One is faultless in his bearing as if to the manner born; this is Alfred Kercheval. The other is slouching along with an invisible load of keys on his back, glowering and suspicious but endeavoring to look like a wedding-guest. This is Henry Schlosser, the Keyman. They pass within.)

YOUNG WOMAN: Well, of all things!

OLD MAN (*drawlingly*): I—always—did—say—a—dress-suit—don't—care—who—wears—it.

(Murray, the butler, directs these last guests and then closes the door. Outside loiterers sigh, and one by one, depart.)

OLD WOMAN: Well, I must say I enjoyed it all very much. And I hope the bride will be happy.

YOUNG WOMAN: So do I. (*The last one goes.*)

(End of First Scene of Fourth Act.)

SCENE II.

(Interior of Miss Harrington's drawing room. Music, dancing of couples, bride and groom standing. Wedding-guests offering congratulations.)

KATE (*to Malcolm*): I can't understand it. You say they haven't come yet? (*greets next guest—Captain and Mrs. Emmons.*) So you are leaving on the China steamer, tomorrow, too?

MRS. EMMONS: Yes. With my adopted baby. She is such a little beauty.

MARIE CASTLETON: Indeed, she is! You know she was the pet of the Infant Shelter! And we could hardly give her up, only it was best for her, of course.

KATE (*to Malcolm*): Go and see if you can't find them. I am afraid Miss Harrington has sent them away. You know she didn't want them to come; but I was determined that my old friends should share my happiness.

MISS HARRINGTON (*aside to the butler*): Murray! Did you put those people down stairs, as I told you?

MURRAY (*deferentially*): I did, Miss Harrington.

MISS HARRINGTON: You may serve them down there, Murray. Give them all the ice-cream and cake they can eat; but do not let them come up-stairs.

MURRAY: Yes, Miss Harrington. No, Miss Harrington. (*bows mechanically*.)

Kate sees Malcolm, fetching them all with him. Murray tries to keep them back, but at the resistance put up, he yields and steps to one side to let them pass, so in they come, quite a wild group all together. Mrs. Spangler, Bobby with Biddy the Bogie at the head of the procession; Mrs. Gusset and with children still pointing fingers at everything they see; Babe and the Parson, Barney and O'Neil, Schlosser and Al Kercheval. Everybody looks in amazement. Miss Harrington is shaking her head in displeasure at Murray. Dr. Kercheval, who is talking to Mrs. Castleton, starts at sight of his runaway son. Morton, at sight of Babe, is aware that his mother will not "take" to such a dowdy, as she appears to be. The Castleton girls and their escorts are smiling, but Marie, the kindest-hearted of the family, joins them to help present them to Kate with less embarrassment. People are all inclined to ridicule the bride for having such friends. But Kate receives them all bravely, and keeps Babe by the hand while she whispers to Malcolm to take them all back again to where he found them.)

KATE: Now, Malcolm, you see to their comfort, and I will be there later.

(*Marie takes little Kree by the hand and Malcolm the two little boys. As all are going, one of the escorts of the Castleton girls intercepts the group, delightedly claiming acquaintance with Barney, who is a great favorite with the public. Barney introduces his friend, O'Neil, and these two are then introduced by the young man to his crowd who make a great fuss over them. They think O'Neil is a minstrel, too. Lina and Jenny rattle on at a great rate talking about "Flewby-flewby" and "My Father Sold Charcoal" and "My Gal, My Gal," "Over the Garden Wall" and the popular songs of the hour. The others of the group disappear.*)

MISS HARRINGTON (*obviously relieved, as she sees them retiring*): That was the bride's old nurse and her family. She is so charitable she did not wish to leave them out. You ought to get her to join some of your societies, Mrs. Castleton. You know, I do believe in charity.

MRS. CASTLETON: So do I. May be Marie could get her to help in the Infant Shelter! You know, that is where Mrs. Emmons got that beautiful baby to adopt, that she is going to take with her to China. And, by the way, we are going down tomorrow to see her off. Won't you come too; Miss Harrington? and we can all see the bride off, too.

MISS HARRINGTON: I certainly will. I like to see those great ships leaving our port. It is so interesting. (*murmur together*.)

KATE (*to Babe, whom she detains, holding her by the hand*): Why didn't you wear the dress I sent you?—a simple dress of white satin?

BABE (*with wide-opened eyes*): I get a dress? Do you think I would have worn a queer thing like this, if I had?

KATE: I sent one, when I sent the box for the Gusssets. There must have been a mistake.

BABE (*sturdily*): It can't be helped, now! I've got to put it through in this wild toggery. Do I look so very awful?

KATE: Very awful indeed! Why, you look like a comic valentine! I can't imagine, but yes, I can. It is Mrs. Spangler's doings, of course.

(*Will Harrington, the husband, introduces some men-friends of his, and Babe is edged to one side. She looks mournfully around the room, at the faces of the wedding-guests. She sees Morton standing beside a handsome elderly lady, with snowy puffs of hair. She knows it is his mother—the mother he had told her would be her friend. But Morton makes no move toward her. She realizes that he is ashamed of her because of her clothes. However, some one is standing near, and it is Malcolm.*)

MALCOLM: Well, how are you enjoying the wedding?

BABE (*with a bursting heart*): What? Are you not afraid to speak to me in such an old-fashioned gown as this?

MALCOLM: Why! What's the matter with it? It looks pretty fine silk to me. You look as if you had just stepped out of a picture. You do, really!

MORTON (*to himself*): Great Heavens! What am I going to do? She's gone and spoiled everything! I know that mother will freeze up at sight of such a little dowdy as this. Where, under the sun, did she get such a crazy rig? Poor little thing! I've got to make the best of it, somehow. (*Morton crosses the room, and offers his arm to Babe, with the air of a martyr. She looks at him, gravely.*)

MORTON (*to Babe*): I want to have you meet my mother. (*Babe takes his arm. He leads her across, and goes through the form of introduction, without any zest, whatever.*) Miss Robinson, this is my mother, Mrs. Morton.

(*The child looks at her, yearningly, but her train gets in the way, and she stumbles over it, while Mrs. Morton gazes coldly at her, and wishes her son would pay his attentions to Miss Castleton, instead of to this crude person. Babe takes it all in. She realizes she is a failure. And at once she leaves them, and makes for the door, and there is no one to say: "Don't go," for Morton is too mortified to speak.*)

BABE (*tearfully*): I know what I'll do. I'll go and hide myself and my foolish gown from all the world! (*as she attempts to go through the door, some one catches her by her wide sleeve that is so out-of-date, and detains her. It is Malcolm.*)

MALCOLM: What's the matter? Doesn't Joe Morton like your green satin dress? Well, I do. It looks just like the French picture on the wall up there—like the Empress Eugenie and her Court. See, if it doesn't! Where did you get it?

BABE (*mournfully*): It was at a second-hand shop. It came out of a trunk of a very rich lady who has been dead for many years. Nobody

ever had this dress on, because the lady was in mourning when it came, but she kept it in her trunk just the same, because it was made in Paris.

MALCOLM (*defiantly*): Of course. Anybody could see that! As for Joe Morton! I'll go and punch his head for him. What do you care? He's nothing much to go back on a girl on account of her clothes. (*scornfully*)

BABE (*childishly*): Of—course—fashions—are—always—changing—all—the—time.

MALCOLM (*chuckling*): Of course! Besides Kate said for me to keep you here till she came. Something's going to happen. You are going to have a big surprise.

(*She starts for the hall to escape. She does not understand. Enter Kate from the hall, hurriedly.*)

KATE: Why, Babe! Where are you going?

BABE (*bluntly*): Home! Society and I don't get along together, very well.

KATE: Nonsense! I could not rest, the way things were, so I went up stairs to my room, and found your dress was sent to me by mistake, and there it is! Just you run up to my room and put it on. The French maid is waiting for you! Be as quick as you can.

BABE (*stupidly*): What? What do you mean, Kate?

KATE: Oh, you little goose. Run along! And Malcolm will be here, waiting for you when you come back. Hurry!

(*With a final stumble over her train, Babe goes. Kate resumes her place beside her husband, Will Harrington, and continues talking to her guests animatedly. Jim Castleton and two young men, the escorts of Lina and Jenny, approach Malcolm where he stands. First young man shakes hands, and then second young man.*)

FIRST YOUNG MAN: Well, Malcolm, I suppose you're going to help us try our Whitehall boat, tomorrow?

MALCOLM: Yes, I won't forget.

SECOND YOUNG MAN: We depend on you, Malcolm!

MALCOLM: All right. I'll be there.

JIM CASTLETON (*patronizingly, holding out his hand*): How are you, Malcolm?

MALCOLM (*starts back suddenly and puts his hand behind him*): I don't know you, sir.

JIM CASTLETON: Hear that, boys? He says he doesn't know me! Introduce me. (*has been drinking champagne.*)

FIRST YOUNG MAN: This is Jim—one of the fellows you know—a good, all-round sport.

SECOND YOUNG MAN: He helps us in lots of things! Does lots for charity.

MALCOLM (*stubbornly*): I don't know him, and I don't want to know him.

JIM: What! You! You hanger-on of Harrington's! You scamp! Do you mean to insult me?

MALCOLM: Yes. And I'm too good to know you! I'm an adopted brother of Lily White's and you don't think a brother of hers would want to shake hands with you, do you?

(Jim gets a shock from these words. He gasps for breath, and reels backward.)

MRS. CASTLETON (coming forward): Oh, my son! What is the matter? I fear he is going to have one of his attacks!

FIRST YOUNG MAN: He's all right, he just needs a little fresh air.

SECOND YOUNG MAN (throws up the window. They go out of sight.

Enter Babe, who is a vision of beauty, in a white satin gown, princess style, made short, with white slippers on and white ribbons in her hair, which is tied back in youthful style. A fluffy, white, circular fan hangs by a white ribbon at her side. She stands near Malcolm, who slowly awakens to the fact that she is there. He offers her his arm, and takes her to Kate, who introduces her to her husband all over again, and he understands, and introduces her to his friends, as if she were a Cinderella, arrived at the ball late.)

BABE (confidentially to Malcolm): Don't let anybody know I am the same girl that was in the green gown, will you?

MALCOLM: No. But I liked the other dress too. It was picture-skew.*

MRS. EMMONS (to Marie Castleton): Who is the beautiful young girl talking to Mrs. Harrington?

MARIE: Why, I don't know. (turning to Mrs. Morton and her son, Joe Morton.) Mr. Morton, do you know who it is? Mrs. Emmons would like to know—that charming little girl who just came in?

MORTON (gazing at her in amazement): I think I do know. Yes. Ah! I know her very well. I'll bring her to meet you all. I have spoken of her to my mother. You know, mother, little Babe Robinson. (he goes to the group, where Babe is talking animatedly with some of Mr. Harrington's friends, waving her fan slowly, and trying to do credit to Kate.)

MORTON (with a frown, and yet offering his arm, for the second time): Babe! I want to introduce you to my mother.

BABE (with playful sarcasm): What? Again?

MORTON (seriously, with a shrug): Have you been doing this to try me?

BABE (waving her fan): You can make out of it what you like.

MORTON: I admit that I was a coward. I was willing to dare all the world for your sake, but I could not make myself ridiculous in the eyes of Society.

BABE (gravely in earnest): I know. Society is the most important thing in the world.

MORTON: I am ashamed to think how your clothes should make

*At this period there was many a quaintness of speech indulged in, of which picture-skew for picturesque is an example.

such a difference to the world, and how it should make none to me, who knew you so well. And yet it did. I am angry at myself. And I will confess it. I am jealous! They all are ready to welcome you now; but I insist you are my little girl, and not theirs. (*he leads her to his group, and introduces her to each one, coming last of all to his mother, Mrs. Morton.*)

MORTON (*proudly*): Mother, this is my little friend, Babe Robinson. The little girl I want you to take under your wing, and look out for. She has had a hard time in the past; but I want you now to take her to your heart, and be a mother to her.

MRS. M. (*puzzled, yet beaming delightfully on the daintily attired young creature*): Yes, my dear, I have heard of you, and I hope I may have the pleasure of having you come to us as soon as we get settled.

(*All Babe can do is to take the hand, extended to her, and then to kiss the cheek of the white-haired dame, impulsively.*)

BABE: Thank you. You are very kind.

MRS. M. (*still perplexed*): But, Joseph, I thought you introduced me to a Miss Robinson, earlier in the evening. A different young lady—much older?

MORTON (*briskly, to change the subject*): Oh yes! another family, altogether. One of the theatrical folks; a real good girl, though: but not my Babe Robinson, mother.

BABE (*to Morton*): So this is the way they talk in Society, is it? (*to Mrs. Morton*) Do you believe everything your son tells you, Mrs. Morton?

MRS. M. (*smiling indulgently*): Well, I have to use my own judgment—sometimes.

BABE (*throwing her head back, and laughing merrily*): Well, I should think so!

MORTON (*wishing to change the subject*): Have you been in the conservatory yet, Babe?

BABE (*trying to be prim*): No, I have not.

MORTON: Then let us go.

MRS. M. (*detaining him*): But, Joseph, the promenade for the banquet is announced. See, they are all forming in line.

MORTON: So they are! Well, we'll take Babe along with us. (*he offers an arm to each. Babe is in an ecstasy of joy.*)

BABE: No wonder everybody is trying to get into Society, when it is all as fine as this! My! Isn't it just like Heaven?

(*March, led by bride and groom, all follow and disappear. Reception room deserted. Music strikes up in the distance. Then come in, higgledy piggledy, the poor people, peering in at the door. Then, gradually entering in and trying the different chairs and sofas, Bobby Spangler, Mrs. Spangler, Aunt Biddy the Bogie, Mrs. Gusset and children, still pointing fingers at everything, and Schlosser and Kercheval, and the Parson who alone maintains his dignity.*)

MRS. SPANGLER: My! and what a foine thing to be rich, sure! (*fans herself with large swoops of her fan.*)

BIDDY: F'wot a power o' windys to be washed, an' all this carpet to be swept, Hennery!

BOBBY (*to Schlosser*): Little did we think, wen we was goin' to the Rincon Grammar School, that we'd be shinin' like dis, in high toned Sassiety.

KEYMAN: Aw! Come off yer perch! Dey don't keer nuffin fer us!

KERCHEVAL: Say, Henry—

(Enter Malcolm, with Dr. Kercheval.)

MALCOLM: He is here, Dr. Kercheval. He is here with the Keyman!

KERCHEVAL (*giving a nervous twist to his high collar, and turning to his comrade*): Game's up, Henry. This is my father!

KEYMAN: Howly Moses!

DR. KERCHEVAL: My son! my son! How glad your poor mother will be!

KERCHEVAL (*begins*): I ain't no fool—to stay up in Sacramento to—when I can be seein' the world—yes—seein' the world—

KEYMAN (*scornfully*): Shut up that racket—yer the doggondest fool I ever see in all my born days. Go home with the old man, and learn sumpin'. Ye don't know any too much.

MALCOLM (*introducing the doctor to the Keyman*): This is Henry Schlosser. He has looked out for your son for six months, or more. As my sister is always saying: "It's the poor that helps the poor."

DR. KERCHEVAL (*in a low voice*): Permit me to thank you for your kindness, and I should like to take Alfred home with me in the early train. How happy his mother will be. Name any sum as a recompense for your trouble.

KEYMAN: No, ye don't! I ain't done nothin'.

ALFRED (*weakly*): Yes, he was real good to me, pa. I was nippin' the bread and milk off the door-steps, when he found me. But I couldn't—I couldn't learn the key-business. It's too much for me. He rented the clothes I got on now, so't I could come—here—tonight—(*voice dies down like a clock*)—yes—tonight—

(Dr. Kercheval puts his hand in his pocket, draws out some twenties, and holds out to Schlosser.)

KEYMAN: Wot d'ye take me fer? (*scowls*) I ain't done nothin'. We was frens, I tell ye!

DR. KERCHEVAL: I owe you a debt I can never repay. By trying to teach my son your trade you have benefited him more than all the schooling I have tried to give him. (*extends hand with money in it*.)

ALFRED: You'd better take it, Henry. You know you was sayin' only yesterday you wished you had three hundred dollars.

(With a sudden start, the Keyman's whole bearing changes. His small eyes light up into a preternatural cunning. He extends his hand and takes the money offered him, almost rudely.)

DR. KERCHEVAL: I'll give you a check for the remainder. You can get it cashed in the morning. Can you get me a pen, Mr. Strong? (*Malcolm gets one for him. The check is written out and passed over to the Keyman. Keyman seems like one in a trance, as Dr. Kercheval hands over the check.*)

KEYMAN (*hoarsely*): All right, if ye say so! (*aside.*) Durn my hide, if I hadn't a'most forgot Belmour. I must git Kerch to buy them tickets fur the China steamer in the mornin' an' git him to give 'em to Mollie. I couldn't have nothin' to do with it! I'd give the game clean away, jist by bein' around. Kerch'll have to give 'em to her so's the cops'll catch on and foller him on a blind trail to Sacramento, an' then Belmour kin git away. He's allers been wite to me. He's allers treated me like a gentleman. But Kerch'll have to help. An' Kerch don't know any too much. I'll have to be a wise gezabo. (*to son of Dr. Kercheval.*) Kerch, tell the ole man yer goin' home with me ter git yer clothes. We'll jist nachelly vamose the ranch. See? Cose I've got some important business on board. Du ye want to do a favor fur Miss Darling? You know she wus pretty nice to you.

ALFRED: Of course! I'd like to do her a favor, an' I'd like to say "Good-bye" to her before I leave for Sacramento—yes, for Sacramento—

(*They converse with Dr. Kercheval and the Keyman is in a state of excitement to get away. Presently they go toward the door.*)

KEYMAN (*meaningly*): Come on, Kertch, let's make ourselves scarce.

(*Malcolm tries to lead the others away to the other room, as Morton and Babe return; but they all surround Babe, with protestations of admiration. The little lame girl, Kree, takes the fluffy fan into her hand to wave, and the others want to smell the perfume on it. Finally Malcolm gets them to go with him. He stands a moment, looking at the two.*)

MALCOLM: So, Babe's forgiven him, already. I don't think he's good enough for her. (*sighs heavily. Leads them all away.*)

Morton and Babe seat themselves in the part of the room where the conservatory shows, but Babe is listening to the music.)

MORTON: You are angry with me. You know you are!

BABE (*impatiently*): What do we want to stay here for, quarreling? I can hear the music in the ball-room; and I should love to go and see the dancing.

MORTON: How can I make my peace with you? I'll do anything you say! But, you know, you *are* my little girl!

BABE (*with dignity*): Well. That's no reason for you to presume! You must promise to never think of such a thing as ever—as ever—kissing—my cheek, again.

MORTON: That's pretty hard! I know I'll break it.

BABE (*meeting his admiring gaze unfalteringly*): Well, Mr. Morton, you may as well know now as at any other time, that I am saving my kisses for my husband!

MORTON (*springing to his feet*): And I want to be that man!

BABE (*turns away from him*): But you may not like me very much! It is only my pretty dress that you like.

MORTON: I swear that it is not! You need not be afraid to trust me. You are to come and live with my mother, and go to school for a year or two, and then—well—then, we'll talk of love and the future.

BABE (*looking at him, and then hanging her head*): But you do not know my secret, Joe! You do not know anything about my—father—my mother—and my step-father.

MORTON (*generously*): I know you, and what a brave little girl you are, and that's enough for me. I can imagine that your step-father wasn't very good to you, and that you ran away. Wasn't that about the truth?

BABE (*looking at him, trying to think whether to say any more, and dreading to do so.*)

MORTON: What is it, dear? What is it that makes you look that way?

BABE (*ready to break down*): There is more to tell—there is more. But I cannot bear to. Oh! You will hate me! (*covers her face with her hands.*)

MORTON (*generous again*): My dear little girl! You can set your mind at rest, now and forever, on that score. You belong to me, and I propose to take care of you, in spite of everything. You are to forget the past and all its sorrows, and begin all over again. It shall be a new life, with mother and me. Look me in the eyes, Babe! (*draws her hands down, laughingly.*) Don't I mean what I say? (*Babe smiles and has faith in him.*)

MORTON: I shall never forget the first time I ever saw you in that red frock.

BABE: I looked like a country girl, didn't I?

MORTON: I kept saying, "It's none of my affair; but what's going to become of her?" And, somehow, I felt responsible! You know! That was why I followed you! And when I found you there, at Mollie Darling's (*bites his lips, to hold back what he would say.*) By the way! What is over is past! But I want you to promise me, Babe, that you will never speak to Mollie Darling, or to Belmour again. They are not the sort of people that I want my future wife to recognize, even. If you pass them in the street, you must act as if you did not see them—as if you were not aware of their existence.

BABE (*readily*): Why, of course! But then, I can't tell what may happen; and you know, Mr. Belmour was very good to me. The money he gave Miss Wigggin kept me alive for six months—until she died. I shouldn't want to be really ungrateful, should I?

MORTON (*petulantly*): Oh, well! Such people are not deserving of much gratitude. I don't know what Belmour's motive was in separating you from Mollie so absolutely, but I'll bet anything, there was a selfish one, underneath it all. I shall not be satisfied unless you give me your word that you will not have anything to do with either of them, under pain of losing all my affection and respect.

BABE (*laughing at Morton's severe tone and seriousness*): Why, I'll give you my word, twice over! I hope that they may never cross my path again. Now that I know that they are queer persons, and not nice, I certainly shall take pains to avoid them, and I am sure that no one is more anxious than I to forget that I ever heard of them, even.

MORTON (*looking into her eyes that meet his gaze unfalteringly*): I am satisfied.

(*All the guests return. The bride takes her departure, to hotel to leave on China steamer next day. The group of friends, gathering around Mrs. Emmons, plan to see them off, next day, at the wharf, where they are to take the steamer. Malcolm agrees to go with the two young fellows, to try the Whitehall boat and be there too. The two society men shake hands with Barney and O'Neil in most friendly fashion.*)

O'NEIL (*to Barney*): Yer a lucky dawg, Barney—ye've taken me inter Sassiety, he! he! an' thot's wot no man ivir did fur me beforre. I owe ye tin dollars fur that an' morre! If I wasn't a worrkin' man I'd ruther be a nigger-minstrel. (*they go.*)

MRS. CASTLETON (*giving orders to her three daughters*): Marie? Did you ask Mr. Morton to call, and bring his mother to see us? And say that we shall call?

MARIE: I think it would be in better taste for you to do it, mamma. (*Mrs. Castleton gives the invitation, with a great flourish.*)

MORTON (*aside to Marie*): And do you think society will receive my little protegee?

MARIE: Money gilds everything! With such friends as Mr. and Mrs. Harrington, and yourself and your mother, and her own winsome personality, it ought to be easy for her to make her way. (*She says it bravely, but is faint at heart; for she has always cared for Morton, even before he got his money.*)

MORTON: And will you be her friend, too? Babe will have to be sent away to school, of course, she is so young—and then—I suppose you can guess my intentions? But with what success can I hope to introduce my wife, who was once a type-setter? Do you think society could forgive it? (*Morton takes Marie's hand in his own, and holds it, as he is speaking.*)

MARIE (*earnestly*): Have her voice cultivated, Mr. Morton. I hear that she has a lovely voice. Have her learn to sing ballads, and she can go anywhere. Society will welcome her.

MORTON: Thank you, Miss Castleton.

MARIE (*aside*): How happy he seems, tonight.

MRS. CASTLETON (*calling*): Come, Marie, we are ready to go. Will you see us to the carriage, Mr. Morton? (*Morton turns to explain to Babe, and leaves her for the moment. Babe stands, looking after him. Malcolm is by Babe's side.*)

MALCOLM: So you have forgiven him for being ashamed of you in your old-fashioned gown?

BABE (*gravely*): Oh! He couldn't make himself ridiculous in Society, you know! Society's the most important thing in the world!

MALCOLM (*with feeling*): Yes, I had forgotten that. Shall you be down at the China steamer, tomorrow?

BABE: Yes. Mrs. Emmons is the lady who has adopted little Bunnie, and I am going to see her off, and say "Good-bye." We shall miss dear little Bunnie, very much. But I am going to go away to school, and learn to sing! Won't that be lovely?

MALCOLM (*heartily*): I congratulate you, Babe. That is good news.

BABE (*eagerly*): But here comes Mr. Morton.

(*Morton returns. Malcolm turns to Mrs. Gusset, the Bogie, Mrs. Spangler, etc., and helps them to the carriage, which is to take them home.*)

MALCOLM (*calls*): Come, Babe! There is a place for you!

MORTON: Good-bye, my little darling! Tomorrow I shall come to take you away forever. (*he kisses her on the forehead, and draws the white shawl around her closely.*)

BABE (*repeating*): Tomorrow? Joe, do you really love me? Are you sure?

MORTON: I do, indeed, my little girl. You are like a little pet lamb, to me.

BABE: Better than you do Marie Castleton?

MORTON: Better than any one, you absurd little creature.

BABE: And will you come just the same as this tomorrow?

MORTON: Just the same tomorrow! and all the tomorrows to come. (*Babe buries her head against his coat-sleeve.*)

BABE: It seems too good to be true!

MALCOLM: Come, Babe, we are waiting for you!

BABE: I must go! (*gives Morton her hand. He kisses it and lets her go. She joins Malcolm and departs. Morton's mother appears in an ermine cloak. He gives her his arm to escort her to the carriage. Miss Harrington, like a grande dame, stands, saying the last farewell. As the last guest departs, she turns to find Murray standing there, like a sentinel, carved in stone.*)

MISS HARRINGTON (*haughtily*): Murray, you may put out the lights, and restore order.

MURRAY (*obsequiously*): Yes, Miss Harrington. (*and Murray goes about quietly and effectively, till all the place is darkened.*)

MISS HARRINGTON: That will do, Murray.

MURRAY: Yes, Miss Harrington. (*she departs.*

Murray stands a brief second, in meditation, then lifts his head, proudly, and departs also.)

(End of Act Four.)

ACT V.—Scene I.

(*Lotta's Fountain. Golden Rule Bazaar. Geary street and Market and Kearny in back-ground. Early a. m. Mollie Darling, heavily veiled. Two detectives following her. Men and a few women passing. Schlosser the Keyman, with a great roll of keys hung across his back, slouches by. Mollie goes up the street and returns. She has a letter in her hand addressed "Robert Belmour." Kercheval appears, jauntily attired, valise in hand. He walks up to Mollie, lifts his hat politely. She gives him the letter.*)

MOLLIE: Good morning! Will you take the letter? Now be careful, and be sure to give it to him. (*Meanwhile, Kercheval gives her a bunch of violets in which are concealed the two tickets to the China steamer.*) Oh, thank you. These are lovely!

KERCHEVAL: I thought you'd like them—yes, like them!

MOLLIE: So I do. And give my love to all the friends in Sacramento. Thank you, so much! (*takes the violets, and passes on. Keyman stops and looks vacantly down Market street. Kercheval passes on down Market street to the ferry. Mollie goes up the street past the keyman, and murmurs, "I've got them."*)

DETECTIVE (*to the other one*): Did you see that, Sam? That feller's carryin' a message from her to her pal? He must be hiding up in Sacramento.

SAM: Aw, I dunno! Looks like a slick game, to me; but ye'd better go along and git that letter. (*Other detective follows Kercheval, who disappears from the play.**)

MOLLIE (*waiting by Lotta's Fountain a moment*): So far, so good. Now what next? I have an idea, if only I could carry it out. I've got to get this ticket to him. Some one has got to go with it, and get him down there to the steamer. Some one who doesn't know anything! Oh, Robert! What if everything should fail! (*detective walks by her, leisurely. After he has passed, she continues in a tumult of feeling.*) Do I know anybody who is honest and good? Whom no one would suspect? Would Babe Robinson do it for him? Kercheval told me she was there, at the wedding last night. The moment I heard her name I began to think of it. He did her a favor. Why should she not do one for him? And she is living at the Irish woman's house! I can but try. But I must act the part carefully so she won't find out. What if she did find out? No, no, she mustn't find out the truth. (*she stops to look in the window of the Golden Rule Bazaar—then walks along leisurely. Detective follows.*)

*The fact is that Kercheval finally became a useful member of society. By his father's influence he was appointed truant-officer. He was especially fitted for this position in life as having "played hookey" himself so often, he knew every nook and cranny in Sacramento in which a bad boy could hide to escape the torments of an undesired education.

SCENE II.

(*Same scene in Mrs. Spangler's as in Third Act. Babe is packing up her things, preparatory to going away from the place forever. She is singing: "Scenes That Are Brightest May Charm for a While" in snatches, between bundling up old books and clothes.*

Enter Mrs. Spangler.)

MRS. SPANGLER (*holding up both hands*): Fur the love o' Hiven! Don't be singing so airly in the mornin'. "Sing before breakfast, an' ye'll be cryin' afther dinner."

BABE: Well, I don't care! I'm glad I can sing when I feel like it. I've got a great surprise for you, Mrs. Spangler. I'm going away to school!

MRS. SPANGLER: An' is that wot yer singin' about? Yer so glad to lave me? Glad to lave Biddy an' me, is it? Och, an' I wouldn't av thought it av ye, afther bein' my little gal all this time. (*head pokes in the door. It is Biddy the Bogie, in rags, as usual.*) Och, Biddy, an' that's wy she's singin'. She's goin' away to school, an' to live wid the high-toned leddies and jints.

(*Biddy throws her apron over her head, and wails in true Irish fashion.)*

BIDDY: Och, me darlint! An' thim is no good, at all, at all.

BABE (*indignantly*): I should think you'd be glad I'm going to get some education.

MRS. SPANGLER: So we are, me darlint! but it'll be a lonely house whin ye are gone.

(*The bell rings. Mrs. Spangler and the Bogie go out to see who it is.*)

MRS. SPANGLER (*outside the door*): Sure, n' she's in, mam. Jist knock at the dure! (*a knock at Babe's door.*)

BABE (*starts*): Who can it be, so early in the morning? Come in! (*she stands looking in mute astonishment as the presence of Mollie Darling stands revealed. What had she promised, only the night before? It was never to speak to Mollie or Belmour again. She draws back. Mollie comes in slowly. Her face is set and white behind her flowing veil. Her eyes are singularly restless.*)

BABE (*coldly*): Well? (*It conveys what she means: "State your business, and go."*)

MOLLIE (*giving way before that cold monosyllable, she pushes up the veil from off her face, and seems to choke*): Oh, Babe! I have come to you to help me. You are the only one I dare ask! I am in great trouble!

BABE (*hard-heartededly*): Oh, you're in great trouble, are you? Then I'm just the person to come to, of course! Whenever this big, old world has troubles of its own it can't fix, why, it always sends them to me. Marriages, births, deaths and funerals seem to have to wait for me to look after them. It's all right. I haven't any troubles of my own. Which is yours? Marriage, birth or death? (*Babe folds her arms, and seats herself, nonchalantly, on the little table in the room, swinging her feet in*)

a pretense at bravado, which she is far from feeling.) It doesn't pay to have such an awful good time every minute, does it? With fluffy feathers hanging down your back, and wearing silks and satins and wraps, and having a dear little phaeton and a horse to drive! You might have known it wouldn't last! I tell you, it's the chalk line that pays best in the end? That's what Steve told me, and it's true. (she hardly knows what she is saying in her confusion, and wondering what to do next, to keep her promise to Morton.

Mollie tears off the veil which falls down over her face again, and walks up and down in desperation like a wild creature. Babe watches her curiously. Mollie turns and looks at Babe like a creature at bay.)

MOLLIE: You always were fond of preaching, but it's too late to talk of the "chalk line," now. I'm in distress. I'm being hunted to death, and you can save me!

BABE (*assuming surprise*): Whew! It's astonishing what confidence people have in me! Say, Mollie, what does all this play-acting mean? What are you so worked up about?

MOLLIE (*with tragic gesture to the window*): Look out there! Wherever I go, that man follows me. Generally there are two. I am watched and hunted every moment.

BABE (*gives a quick look and turns to Mollie, with sympathetic whispers*): Oh, Mollie! Is it as bad as that?

MOLLIE (*with arms extended*): You can—save—us!

BABE (*starting back, with repulsion in her every feature*): US? You mean—Mr.—Belmour? (*slowly*)

MOLLIE (*mutely*): Yes.

BABE (*going back to the table, and assuming an indifferent mood again*): Nuh! Ain't in the savin' business, this year. (*gives a shrug of disdain*.)

MOLLIE: What! Not when he saved you, when you were alone in the world?

BABE: Can't help it!

MOLLIE: What! Not when he saved you from worse than that? Don't you know that he saved you—from—from—me? That is why you are honest and good today! You can go anywhere! And you owe it to him!

BABE (*meditatively*): I suppose that is so; I never thought of it before. I was so stupid (*is covered with confusion, hesitates, then begins again*). You say I am honest and good. Well, that is about all there is of me! And if I should go into a skittish thing, like this, I'm afraid there wouldn't be anything of me left.

MOLLIE (*in a keen whisper*): It is life or death to him!

BABE (*arousing herself*): And it is life or death to me too! Why, Mollie Darling, if that is your name, I am to leave this poor little place and go into a real home, with a lovely lady to look after me. I am to go away to school, and then after that, I am to go into Society! Isn't that life and death to me? Why can't you get some one else to help you out?

MOLLIE: We can't trust them! They would tell the police, and divide the reward among them.

BABE: What wretches! (*she looks into Mollie's eyes and begins to come under the influence of the spell cast upon her.*)

MOLLIE (*in a low, persuasive tone*): He was good to you when you were in distress. He helped you when you had no other friend. He stood between you—and—me! and changed your life in consequence. I don't know why; but he did. You are honest and good, and you will save him from all these wretches, who would give him up for the reward.

BABE (*taking another look out of the window*): He is still there.

MOLLIE (*bitterly*): Yes! He dogs my steps, day after day.

BABE (*quickly*): Tell me what I am to do! What have you planned?

MOLLIE (*eagerly*): The steamer leaves for China today. I have the tickets. I want you to carry the word and get him down to the docks. He is very sick. Very weak. You would hardly know him!

BABE (*waking up*): Did you say China steamer? I know a lady. She is the captain's wife. She is going on it today. She is taking a little baby with her that she's adopted.

MOLLIE (*alertly*): Has she a nurse for it?

BABE: No! Nobody wanted to go to Hong Kong.

MOLLIE (*urgently*): Tell me her name! Give me her address! I will go as the nurse. I will get cap and aprons, and pass myself off for a French maid. You know I can speak French. It will be easy. I see my way clear.

BABE (*sadly depressed*): How did you know how to find me?

MOLLIE: It was Kercheval told me. His father was at the wedding, and gave the Keyman some money, and he had it on his mind to tell me about your being there too. Poor creature! But it has been an inspiration to me. And the Keyman got Kercheval to buy the tickets, and give them to me. But I couldn't take the tickets to Belmour. Neither could the keyman. He is likely to be arrested any minute. He is the only one who is faithful and that we can trust! But *he* couldn't take *him* down to the steamer. It needs some one like you. And here is the address.

BABE (*sighing, as she takes it*): What a miserable world! Just when everything seems to be all right, then you have to lose everything.

MOLLIE: I am sorry, Babe, to be the one to trouble you, but he helped you—he saved your life, and you owe him something. Remember, I trust in you as I never did in a human being before, and I promise, if we escape, our lives shall be different. (*ties her veil on rapidly.*)

BABE: You are dreadfully nervous, aren't you? Well (*sighs*), I have promised to help. I should rather lose all my happiness than to feel I had been ungrateful. I'll do my level best. I can't promise any more than that.

(*Mollie goes out of door. Babe goes to the window to look out. Sees the man leisurely following Mollie down the street, and some one else coming along. It is Joe Morton.*)

BABE (*joyfully*): Oh, there's Joe! How glad I am! He's looking up. (*she waves her hand.*) But he seems so strange. He's coming in. My!, I've got on my old dress, and the room is in a regular upset.

(*Knock on the door. Babe runs and opens the door. Morton comes in.*)

BABE (*joyously*): Oh! I'm glad you came! You see— (*starts, bites her lip, draws back.*) What's the matter, Joe? Why, you look so strange! (*seriously*) But you promised, last night to come in the morning, just the same! (*wistfully*.)

MORTON (*gazing on her with close scrutiny, speaks harshly*): Was Mollie Darling here?

BABE (*nods gravely*): She was here. I couldn't keep her from coming, could I?

MORTON (*peremptorily*): What—did—she—want?

BABE (*wistfully*): It wouldn't be right for me to tell on her, poor thing, would it? (*she takes hold of the table, for it seems as if the world were going round.*)

MORTON (*eagerly*): I insist upon knowing. Why—why—last night you promised me never to have anything more to do with her. And here, early in the morning, I come, sooner than expected, and find her leaving your door. What does it mean? What does she want? For Heaven's sake, Babe! Confess the whole thing to me, and I will believe you, even now! Let me take you away from this den of thieves, and put an end to these dreadful suspicions! But I insist, first that you shall tell me what she wants of you.

BABE (*weakly*): Dear Joe! I don't know what to do! (*clasps her hands together.*)

MORTON (*drawing out his watch*): Babe! I have only five minutes to spare. I will give you that five minutes. If during this time you refuse to explain this thing to me— (*voice breaks. Turns away overcome.*)

BABE (*springing to his side, she puts her head against his arm, and he clasps her hand in his*): Oh, Joe! has it come to this, so soon? Can't you trust me the least little bit? You know you have been a reporter, and you are very hard-hearted. It isn't my secret. I can't tell you, because it would be wicked and mean, and you wouldn't have me be wicked and mean, would you?

MORTON (*hoarsely*): You owe that woman nothing—nothing! And I have forbidden you to speak to her. That should be enough for you. Oh, Babe! Don't you see how this will ruin our lives?

BABE (*feeling herself tempted to tell*): All right—it's nothing to me. No, no! I can't tell. I won't tell. I don't care what happens to me.

MORTON (*relaxing his hold*): Very well! I might have known! But your fresh young face and your innocent eyes have deceived me, for I believed you to be honest and good, in spite of all the mysteries that have surrounded you from the beginning. You have tried me once too often. We may as well say "Good-bye." (*turns toward the door.*)

BABE (*running to intercept him, and putting her hand out to detain him*): Oh, no! don't go away angry with me? Why, Mr. Morton. I'll tell you everything! It's nothing to me!

MORTON (*turning to her fiercely*): Now then! What is it? What did she want?

BABE (*clutching at the door, to hold herself up*): Oh! I can't! I won't!

MORTON (*jealously*): It must be something very strange. I believe it is Belmour, who sent her. The hound! I could kill him with my own hands!

BABE (*gently*): Hush! What would you want to kill anyone for? Killing is a—horrible—thing—and—it—is—always—the—innocent—who—have—to—suffer—for—the—guilty.

MORTON (*looking at her in amazement*): What a strange child you are! Do you know you could deceive the devil himself with those innocent eyes and ways of yours. Once more: Will you tell me what she came for? Was it not something about Belmour?

(*Babe looks at him mutely.*)

MORTON: I can read it in your eyes. Bah! I am a fool. Let me get out of here, into the fresh air! (*he goes out like one bereft of his senses.*)

BABE (*following him*): Tomorrow—tomorrow—I'll tell you. Tomorrow, Mr. Morton. (*she puts her hand to her head.*) What's that? My head is going round. I've got too much to do. (*puts her hand into the water-pitcher and splashes a handful into her face.*) Oh, dear! I can't think of my own troubles, today. I'll put them off till tomorrow. He is there, weak and sick! And he saved me! (*puts on her little cape and sailor-hat, takes up the address and ticket and goes out twistfully.*)

(End of Second Scene.)

SCENE III.

(Alley in Tehama street, near Fourth. A door is cut in fence leading to back room in a tumble-down house. Room is forlorn. A couch, wooden chair and table, ragged curtain at window. Sounds of children's voices fighting and screaming in the alley. Belmour, lying on couch, pale, beard grown; is frayed with the stress of existence. Is playing solitaire. Puts the cards down, absently.)

BELMOUR: And yet, I go on thinking! Life is a game that is not worth the candle. All my years I have been seeking an ignis fatuus and now, at last memory has its revenge. I hear children's voices wrangling and jangling, and my mind insists on going back to when I was myself a child. I can't get away from it! Headstrong, self-willed, petted and spoiled by an indulgent mother. How exquisite she was, in every way! I can see her, and my little sister Ida, as plainly as if they stood before me, on the day I returned home from college, as they stood there on the long verandah! If only I could forget that picture! In spite of all my wild career, I see them still, standing there! Everything else is blotted

out but that picture! Had I stayed there with them, should I now be different from what I am? A Southern gentleman of family and standing, instead of—this? (*he glances around the room.*) Lying in durance vile, a fugitive from justice with a price upon my head, with my sole companion, a poor, uncouth hoodlum, to whom I owe my very life? (*takes up the pack of cards, and begins to play solitaire again. Screams of children in the alley, some playing ball, some drumming. Bitterly lets the cards drop from his hands.*)

BELMOUR: I can see them there—all in white, like angels, in a dream. But I did not realize then, how great was to be my fall! (*takes up the cards again.*)

Suddenly there comes a quick knock at the door, and a quick tattoo, not quite according to the signal. He drops the cards, and quickly snatches his revolver from under the pillow of his couch, and looks in the direction of the door, with a white, set face. His mind is made up that he will die rather than be taken alive.)

VOICE (from without): It is a friend. I bring good news.

BELMOUR (hoarsely): Who is there

VOICE: Some one from Mollie.

(*Belmour is staggered by this reply. He puts down his pistol and draws on a great coat with fur collar, closely about him. Feebly, he makes his way to the door, draws back the bolt, and Babe Robinson enters.*)

BELMOUR: Wait a moment. I shall have to lie down again. (*he looks at her with a grim expression, keeping his hand on his pistol in the pocket of his coat.*)

BABE (trying to do her best): I'm awfully sorry, Mr. Belmour, to see you in such a plight; but I bring you good news from Mollie. Here is the ticket for the China steamer, and I have promised to get you down there safely.

BELMOUR (warily): When did you see Mollie?

BABE (innocently): Just a little while ago, about twenty minutes. Of course, I didn't like to do it at first, but she reminded me of how you made me go with Miss Wiggins—that—night! And what do you think? Just outside, I was met by a policeman—and it was nobody but Bobby Spangler. I knew him before he was on the force, so I told him I was coming to see a sick friend, and it'll be all right! He'll do anything for me! (*another knock, with the proper tattoo, is heard.*)

BABE: Shall I open the door? (*Belmour nods. She opens the door, and admits the Keyman.*)

KEYMAN (scowling): Wot's she doin' here? Wimmen always spoil everything, an' how'd she git here?

BELMOUR: Mollie sent her with the ticket to the China steamer, and we are to listen, and not talk.

KEYMAN (to Babe): I don't think much o' ye wimmin. My mawther trowed me out, wen I was a kid, 'cause I was so ugly, an' I've hated ye all ever sense, but I guess you're pretty wite to be helpin' uv Mr. Belmour. You know I'm his pal.

BABE (*with sudden misgiving*): I don't know what is it you have done, Mr. Belmour, to get into such trouble as this, indeed, I did not stop to think and ask, because I hope it isn't anything awfully bad, is it? Because I wouldn't like to think I had had a hand in it. It wouldn't be fair to me.

BELMOUR (*in suppressed tone*): Just a scrape.

KEYMAN (*gloatingly*): Yes, and a mighty big one too. None of yer little, mean, petty larceny cases fur him. He's too proud!

BELMOUR (*sitting up*): To tell you the truth, I'm not fit to have you come to help me. It would be better for you to go away again. (*he says this with a new expression coming into his face, half smile, half commiseration.*)

BABE (*doubtfully*): Oh, no! you were good to me once, and I am sure it is only right that I should help you, when you are in trouble. But I hope it is not so very bad, whatever you have done, to have the detectives hunting you so! Because, of course, it would be awful, if what Schlosser says is true. (*looks vaguely from one to the other.*)

KEYMAN (*grinning gruesomely*): Of course it's true! Wot d'ye take me fur? D'ye think I'd be yere if it was a ordinary case? No! There's five thousand dollars reward offered fur him!

(*Belmour rises, staggers to the chair from the couch, resolved to tell her, himself.*)

BELMOUR: It is true that I am charged with stage-robbery. (*his voice fails him. Wonder, terror, nameless dread hold Babe speechless as she looks from the one face, full of diabolical glee, to the other, so white, so worked upon by inward emotion. Belmour continues, brokenly.*) It was a mistake. I didn't mean it. My pistol went off. He fell. But I did not mean it, before God, I did not!

(*A sudden, sharp scream bursts from Babe's lips, as the truth flashes over her.*)

BABE: Oh! (*then in forced tones.*) It was you! It was you, who killed my Steve! I know it! I feel it! God has brought me here to avenge his death! I am to be the one to bring you to justice! Now I shall see you dragged to the scaffold. Thank God for that. (*she wrings her hands in excitement.*)

The Keyman is approaching, covertly, as if to seize and hold her. Belmour shakes his head.

BELMOUR: Let her alone. Let her have her say.

BABE (*considers*): No, death is too good for you. You ought to be tortured. I hope the rope will break, and that the sheriff will have to do it over again, and that you will be a long time dying. Oh, Steve! my good, kind friend, you are to be avenged, at last! I will go out, and call the policeman outside, and have you punished for your wicked murder of my poor Steve!

(*Belmour arises from his chair. He looks very tall and thin in the long, fur-lined coat. He is deadly white, save for those red spots blazing in his cheeks. The Keyman stands to guard the way to the door.*)

BELMOUR: Very well! And you will get the reward.

BABE (*starting as if she had been struck in the face*): The reward! As if I would soil my fingers with it! No! No one shall have any reward. It is merely the justice of it that I want!

(*Belmour sinks down again into the chair. He gazes at her fixedly. She walks up and down, clasping her hands together, the Keyman watching her every move. At last she comes to a stop once more in front of Belmour.*)

BABE (*in a low suppressed tone*): It would be better if I killed you, myself.

(*Belmour extends his pistol to her coolly.*)

BELMOUR: Take it and satisfy your wish. It will save me the trouble, for I won't be taken alive.

(*Slowly she takes the weapon from him, looks at it strangely, and then at him, fixedly. Keyman tries to get behind the closet door.*)

BABE: Where—did—you—get—this? Where—did—you—get—this?

(*Belmour waves his hand toward the Keyman, vaguely.*)

Babe turns to the Keyman, holding the weapon out toward him, waiting for a reply, while he shrinks, trying to get out of range.)

BABE: Tell me the truth; or it will be the worse for you.

KEYMAN (*unwillingly*): I found it.

BABE: Where?

KEYMAN: Up-stairs. It come out of a bundle of Joe Morton's an' I took it—fur 'im!

BABE: Yes. Yes. It's Steve's pistol, that he gave me, and I gave it to Mr. Morton, to keep for me. (*her voice gets faint.*) It's Steve's, that he put in my hand when he said good-bye. Oh! Oh! What shall I do?

(*She wavers, and to keep from falling, sits down on the floor, from weakness, and weeps violently.*)

BABE: Oh, Steve! My dear old Steve! I have seen him, and I know him; but I can do nothing! I know this is a sign to me. You wouldn't want me to do anything like that. You always wanted me to be good, and I know it would be wrong to kill him. He will have to be let live—live.

(*The pistol slips from her hand and slowly keeps on sliding till it is on the rough boards of the floor. This the Keyman sees, and fixes his gaze upon it. She is weeping again, and drawing her little print dress to her eyes for something to dry her tears upon.*)

BABE: And I've lost my other friend, too, just by coming here to help you out. Joe Morton says he'll never speak to me again, because I wouldn't tell him what Mollie wanted of me. I can't bear it!

(*The Keyman is slowly crawling along on the floor, toward the revolver, to get it. But suddenly she seems electrified by a new thought. She pulls the hem of her skirt from her eyes roughly, and stands up with a new strength and resolution. The Keyman shrinks back again.*)

BABE (*apologetically, to Belmour*): I forgot! It is true! You were good to me, Mr. Belmour! You did save me from Mollie. She told me so this morning. What would have become of me, if it hadn't been for you? You did try to atone for Steve's death. I won't try to forgive you; but I will help you to get away.

(*Takes notice of Keyman trying to reach the revolver. She pushes it toward him with her foot, scornfully. He takes it sheepishly. Slips it into his pocket.*)

BABE: Take it. I don't want it. (*she turns to the gambler once more.*) There is one thing, though, that you will have to do.

BELMOUR (*with an eloquent gesture. He has eloquent hands*): Do with me as you will.

BABE: If you will marry poor Mollie, before you go, I will help you down to the China steamer.

BELMOUR: I am willing; but it is impossible. We cannot run any risk.

BABE: If you will promise, I will make it perfectly safe. You owe it to her! Whatever she is, she is faithful to you. (*cagerly*) I know a good old parson, who will do anything for me. I can get him here in a few minutes, and her too.

BELMOUR (*briefly*): Go ahead.

(*Babe goes to the door, and out, without another word. After she is gone, Belmour turns to the waiting Keyman and fixes his gaze upon him.*)

BELMOUR: You've been a good friend to me. You've kept me alive here. You've done everything. You did not give me up for the reward.

KEYMAN (*roughly*): Cheese it! Wot d'ye take me fur? Ain't ye my pal? Ain't we frens?

BELMOUR: I'm going to ask a great favor of you, Henry! Whatever happens, today, whether I get away, or whether I am nabbed, I want you to go to Joe Morton, and give him back that six-shooter, and tell him what happened here today. We don't want her to lose any more of her friends on account of us.

KEYMAN: Don't you be afeard of me. I ain't goin' back on her. She's wite, she is!

BELMOUR (*falling back with exhaustion*): Help me to dress, and then let me be quiet for a little while.

(*Keyman gets out clothes, and curtain falls for one minute.*)

Curtain rises. Same scene. Belmour lying on couch, dressed, with over-coat off. Keyman tidying up the room. Tattoo and signal at the door. Enter Babe with the Parson and a French nurse, arrayed in dark straight skirt, long white apron, freshly starched linen cap, frilled about her head, black hair, parted and drawn down over her ears, and a baby heavily wrapped, in her arms. It is asleep, and remains asleep.)

BELMOUR (*arouses himself, as the French maid comes to his side*): Is this—Mollie?

MOLLIE (*replying in French*): All is well. We shall get away. Only hurry.

BABE: Come, Parson Hager! I want you to marry these two people.

(*The two stand up. Parson Hager begins a brief service. At the sound of his voice Mollie shrinks away.*)

BELMOUR: What is it? Are you ill?

MOLLIE: Oh, I am afraid! You remember Gertrude? This is her father.

BELMOUR (*breathing heavily*): My God! What next?

BABE: We have no time to lose. What is the matter? Why don't you go on, Parson?

(*Parson Hager pulls at his old-fashioned cravat as if choking with emotion.*)

BABE (*to Mollie*): You're not his daughter, not the daughter he has been hunting everywhere for the last ten years? Don't tell me that. I couldn't stand it!

MOLLIE (*still shrinking away*): No. I am not; but I know where she is, if you want me to tell you.

PARSON (*mournfully*): Yes, it is time to make restitution for the past. But, can you restore her to me as she was then, when you played upon her mind with your temptations and your arts? Can you give her back to me, young and innocent, again? (*he groans, and covers his eyes with his hand.*)

MOLLIE (*moodily*): She always was strong-willed. She has escaped what you most fear. You will find her at the hospital in Clay street. She has been a night-nurse for years.

BABE (*fairly wild at these words*): Sister Gertrude? And she was the one who came with Miss Wiggins to save me, that night, and Mr. Belmour made me go. Yes, yes! What a strange world it is! (*turning to the parson, while the Keyman looks on in the background.*) Let us be thankful, Parson Hager. Go on, and marry these two. They have got to go on the China steamer as soon as possible, and then I will take you to see your daughter. She will be down there to see the poor little baby off! Be glad; for she is one of the noblest women in San Francisco.

(*Parson holds out his hands. What follows is in pantomime. Then he and Babe, and Mollie with the baby in her arms go forth, quietly. The Keyman, full of concern, shakes hands with Belmour and slouches forth, his keys on his back, as usual. Babe returns with Policeman Spangler, who helps to get Belmour to the door, and to the carriage. Carriage wheels are heard.*)

(End of Scene. Curtain Falls.)

LAST SCENE

(Dock. End of Third street. Big ship. Rough surroundings. Gangplank, with passengers going up. Tearful farewells. Young Irishman goes up and sits near the rail, and weeps copiously, his friends being on the dock. The dock-men begin to guy him, giving cat-calls, and making his grief ridiculous. His handkerchief becomes so saturated with tears

he wrings it out. Dockman holding up a quarter of a dollar as one would bribe a child, "Here's two bits fur ye, if ye'll stop yer cryin'."

Young Irishman, changing from grief to anger, stands up and cries, "Shure, it's Dennis O'Rourke can whip the whole o' yez. Come on wid yez."

Sister, on the dock, implores him to go inside. Returning to his violent weeping again, he obeys and goes within the cabin.

Arrives a group, Miss Harrington, Kate, now Mrs. Harrington, Mr. Harrington, the Castletons, and their escorts, and Malcolm. Malcolm says a good-bye to his sister, and he and the young men come down the gang-plank to get into their Whitehall boat, to follow the steamer. They refer to their boat as they go. Exit Malcolm and the young men, escorts of the young ladies.

Arrives another group, Captain Emmons, wife and French maid with child in arms. Nurse is talking French to the baby; as she comes up the gang-plank two detectives admire the trim figure of the French maid. Detective has a telegram from his fellow who went to Sacramento. Says he got the letter from that swell guy; but it was only a blank sheet inside. They've lost our trail. She's give us the slip, somehow! But we've got a pointer on that Keyman! They say he knows something. We're going to watch him now. See, there he is! Keyman slouches into sight. Stands near a post on the dock, burdened down with keys on his back, and in bag, held in his hand. Gazes at everything indifferently, as if he took no interest in anything. Parson arrives, looks around anxiously. Joe Morton arrives, with his mother, who says good-bye to Mrs. Emmons. The Castletons are there, all gaiety and merriment, and Miss Harrington. Sister Gertrude is in the background. Emperor Norton, in full uniform, passes by, bowing to all. Gives a rose from his button-hole to a little girl, who takes it, much honored.

Mrs. Spangler and her sister, Biddy the Bogie, appear, to wave a good-bye to the baby, in the arms of the French maid. They join Sister Gertrude, presently. Then a man and a girl, alighting from a carriage, are made way for by an important policeman. Bobby Spangler cannot resist showing off.)

Bobby Spangler (policeman): This way, sor. Hope ye'll have a pleasant journey!

(As they reach the gang-plank, Babe, in her rusty little cape and felt hat, that makes a halo effect around her young face, feels her courage fail her at sight of those on board whom she knows, saying good-bye to the baby, but whom she doesn't wish to meet.)

Babe: I won't go any farther. (making an effort at acting.) Good-bye! Give my love to your wife, Mr. Morgan.

Belmour (who seems like some traveler, seeking his health, in a sea-voyage, with shawl on his shoulders, no longer alert, cane in hand): Good-bye, little angel of God! (but he does not extend his hand, nor does she hers.)

Babe (simply): You saved me, and I have tried to save you.

BELMOUR: You were, to me, like my little sister.

BABE: If Steve could have chosen, he would have had it this way. He would have given his life for me, I know!

(Belmour goes on his way, slowly up the gang-plank. Babe steps to one side. A man in the crowd speaks.)

MAN (pityingly): I guess that's about the last journey that poor fellow will ever take. He's in the last stages of consumption.

BABE (despairingly): Now what shall I do? Everybody's gone, even the baby! I have no friends left! I'll go off alone, by myself somewhere, and watch the ship going out the Golden Gate. And after that—what? (goes out of sight, up to farther end of dock.)

Morton leaves his mother with Miss Harrington, etc. Walks slowly down the gang-plank. Seeks Parson Hager and stands next to him, as if by accident. They salute each other.)

MORTON: Parson, did you know a woman by the name of Mollie Darling? (looks into his face intently.)

PARSON (wearily): It sounds more like the name of a song, than of a woman.

MORTON: You are right; but I knew a woman who took the name of the song for her own, and I have a grudge against that woman! I feel as if I could tear the cap from her head and the wig, and make known to all here who it is that has just crossed the plank and boarded the China steamer in disguise.

PARSON (in bewilderment): Why, my dear sir! What has she done to you? I thought she was her own worst enemy!

PARSON (brokenly): She has pursued an innocent child. She has destroyed all my faith and trust in one I cherished, with all my—heart.

PARSON (tremulously): Of whom do you speak?

MORTON: Babe! The child you knew up country. Little Miss Robinson!

PARSON (with a joyful smile): You are mistaken! You are deceived! I would to God, He had given me such a daughter as Babe Robinson!

MORTON: I should like to believe you. I must have the whole truth, for I can endure no more! What was the matter, up in the country? Why did she leave her home, and make such a mystery of it?

PARSON: Her mother married the wrong man, my dear sir! The children threw it up to her.

MORTON: Wrong man? What do you mean?

PARSON: It was a terrible tragedy! The mother should not have married him! He had killed Mr. Robinson, by accident, they said. He was sorry for it, and married the widow, to provide for her and the child; but it was wrong! And poor little Babe had to do the suffering! The children threw it up to her, and Steve decided it was best for her to go where no one knew her! And as you know, Steve was killed, so she had not a friend left in the world!

MORTON (*dazed*): And so that's all there is of the mystery?

PARSON: All! That's all!

MORTON: But there is more to explain. I saw her, with my own eyes, in Mollie Darling's parlor, the first night she arrived from the country. Last night she gave me her promise that she would never again speak to Mollie nor her partner again; and this morning, I found that the woman had been to see her; and Babe admitted to me that they had a secret together. What am I to believe? That she is innocent, still?

PARSON (*solemnly*): For years, I have sought to find my long lost daughter. This morning, Babe came to me to have me perform the marriage service for a couple who had never been married, though they had lived together for years, as man and wife. And, through that, I have news of my daughter. Can you understand what all this means to me? As for the couple; they have crossed that plank to go away to a foreign land, to begin their lives over again, and you call the wife's name— (*enter detective.*)

DETECTIVE: Hello, Morton! Glad to hear of your good fortune. (*shakes hands.*) As you are not a reporter, any more, I'm going to tell you about that man we've been after so long. We've been on the trail of Mollie Darling for the past three months. She gave us the slip this morning, somehow; but we'll pick up the trail again pretty soon. From this news, you can guess who it is Wells Fargo are after. Five thousand reward for me and my mate, to divide between us. I know you'll keep it safe till we get our bracelets on him.

MORTON (*hoarsely*): Not Belmour, the gambler? Was he the one who killed the stage-driver?

DETECTIVE: Yep, and he'll swing for it too. (*exit.*)

MORTON: Parson, did you know this?

PARSON: No, I did not.

MORTON: Let them escape, and good riddance to them! Hush! Not a word!

(*Vessel swings out, into the stream. Tug-boat whistles. (Motion picture of departing ship. Keyman slouches in close to the two men, looking apprehensively after the detectives.)*)

KEYMAN (*in hoarse whisper*): Say. You, Joe Morton! I want ter speak to ye a minnit! (*Morton turns around, nods to the Keyman.*) It's a letter fur ye, tellin' ye the sand in that little gal, Babe Robinson. She's wite, she is! An' I believe she could kill a man as quick as a wink if she wanted to. (*Morton takes the note, reads it quickly, only a few words.*)

MORTON (*angrily*): But she didn't know that it was Belmour who killed Steve?

KEYMAN (*warningly*): H'sh! Ye wouldn't be givin' him away, wud ye, wen she forgive 'im 'erself? Coorse she did! An' was goin' ter kill 'im 'erself. An' then, wen he give her the pistol to do it with, she thought it over, for she had seen that there shooter afore, an' she said Steve had give it to her, and she had give it to you, an' I found it on

the flure and took it fur 'im, an' there it was! An' she cried jest like a gal, and said no one should have the reward, an' she'd 'elp 'im git away. An' yere's yer pistol—I promised Belmour I'd giv it to ye. (*slinks back again, out of sight.*)

MORTON: My God! To think of that child, that innocent child! In such a place as that! Let us find her, and take her home!

(*Ensemble of society people. Miss Harrington, Mrs. Morton, Mrs. Castleton and Marie. Nearer, are Mrs. Spangler, the Bogie, Sister Gertrude, Mr. Morton.*)

MARIE CASTLETON: We are wondering why Babe did not come down to say good-bye to little Bunnie. Have you seen her?

THE PARSON: She was here a few moments ago. She is going to take me to see my daughter (*he trembles*) who is called "Sister Gertrude."

(*Sister Gertrude turns away, half fainting.*)

MRS. SPANGLER (*effusively*): Then here she is, then! Spake up! Spake up to yer feyther, my dear! An' a fine gyurl she is, sor. One of the best wimmin in the worrl!

SISTER GERTRUDE: Father! (*turns to him.*)

PARSON (*enfolding her*): Thank God!

SISTER GERTRUDE (*arousing herself*): But where is she—the little dear who has done so much for all of us? She has kept even my heart from turning to stone! She is the one that saved poor little Bunnie!

MRS. SPANGLER: She's here, somewhere, shure.

KEYMAN (*coming out from the back-ground*): Oh! I seen 'er! She was walkin' down the edge o' the dock, dreamin' like. Ef I hadn't a knowed she was so full o' grit, I'd a thought she was a goin' to fall in.

MORTON (*starting*): Which way? Where has the child gone? Let us take her home!

MARIE CASTLETON: Oh, Mr. Morton! can't I go too? Poor little thing! We must all be her friends. She did save Bunnie's life!

MORTON: As if she should have to marry me! I won't hold her! Who am I? The selfish, the conceited, compared with that innocent little heart? She is only sixteen. She needs a brother, and a father, and that's what I am going to be to her! Let us find her and take her home. (*all follow, with Keyman in the lead.*)

Scene changes in the back-ground, to the point of the dock, where the figure of Babe stands revealed, poised for the fatal plunge. Whitehall boat comes in sight.)

BABE (*forlornly*): There's no hope for me, at all! I've lost my best friend, and helped my worst enemy. Little Bunnie's been taken away, and there's nothing left to love. The bay will be a kinder friend to me than the cruel old city. (*whispers.*) How black and cold the water looks! Oh, God! Let me drown quickly. I'm sorry! I'm sorry! (*plunges in.*)

Morton comes, running! Cry from the Whitehall boat! Some one leaps from it, into the waves. As the form of Babe comes up, the rescuer

grasps her in his arms. Morton tears off his coat, rushes to the edge of the dock. Others gather, wringing their hands. Boat reaches wharf. Keyman throws down a rope, tied to the dock. Rescuer seizes it. Those in the boat help together. Morton and others draw up the form of Babe, and the rescuer, both dripping wet.)

RESCUER: Look out for Babe, I'm all right!

MARIE: Why, Malcolm!

(Morton extends his hand to him silently.)

MRS. SPANGLER AND THE BOGIE (both weeping): The pore choidl!

(Marie takes off her cloak. Sister Gertrude puts her shawl about Babe. Bobby Spangler produces a flask, and a little whiskey is poured down her throat. Morton, kneeling by her side, takes her hand. Presently Babe gives a shiver and the blue eyes open. Keyman observes this.)

KEYMAN: Jes' in nick of time. A minnit more and she'd been a goner!

(Babe looks wonderingly from one to another; till at last, her eyes meet Morton's. Then she begins to weep, and her body shakes with convulsive sobs.)

MORTON: Don't cry, dear! don't be worried! All your troubles are over now.

BABE (sitting up slowly and twistfully): What's the use of trying to keep me alive? My troubles can never be over. There is no way for me to be happy in this world. I was just put here to carry out the punishment of the innocent for the guilty!

MORTON (holding up his hand, in protest): I know everything, little girl. The parson has told me. (the parson kneels by her and assures her this is so.) And how brave you have been. And there is an answer to all your troubles, dear Babe. Just one!

(Babe leans forward, eagerly, as Sister Gertrude holds her arms around her.)

MORTON: Love is the answer to all our troubles and woes. Isn't it, friends? Love and sympathy?

(Murmur of voices blended in an affirmative response.)

Babe attempts to rise, with new hope stirring within her.)

BABE (delaying): Yes. But there is one thing more which one must have in order to be really happy.

MORTON: What is it? I promise you, beforehand, that you shall have it..

BABE (rising to her feet, with Sister Gertrude helping her): Society! We cannot live without SOCIETY! We must have friends and companions, or life is very sad.

(They laugh, and draw the shawls around her. Marie kisses her on the cheek; while Miss Harrington scolds her a little, and then orders her carriage to drive up.)

MISS HARRINGTON: Now, Sister Gertrude, you and your father can

take Malcolm and Babe in my carriage, to my home, and we'll look out for these children.

MORTON: But, my dear Miss Harrington, Babe belongs to us! She is going to stay with my mother—why, mother?

(But Mrs. Morton being a cold-hearted Eastern woman shrinks away at the very thought, and Morton is covered with mortification. Miss Harrington smiles in a superior way and turns to Sister Gertrude. Sister Gertrude takes her hand gently. Miss Harrington is filled with compassion for the homeless child.)

MISS HARRINGTON (*authoritatively*): Not a word! It pleases me to do this. And won't you all come and dine with me tonight?

MALCOLM: Well! I'll see to it that Babe has all the friends she wants, for I'm going to be her brother! And Joe Morton, won't you be a kind of an adopted father to us both till Kate comes back?

(Morton closes in and gives him a bearish kind of hand-clasp and paternal embrace. Murray arrives.)

MISS HARRINGTON (*haughtily*): Murray, will you tell Dennis to drive here? *(Murray bows and goes. Miss Harrington turns to Malcolm with a smile.)* And why can't I be an adopted aunt to you both?

MALCOLM (*warmly*): So you shall! Won't that be fine, Babe?

BABE: Yes, it will! And see (*she turns to Morton and points in the direction of the Golden Gate*) the ship is away out, going through the Gate with all its burden of sorrow! And I am here—safe with FRIENDS!

(Murray comes with Dennis and the carriage. Babe turns to Morton and to Marie who help her to do as Miss Harrington bids, authoritatively, which is to enter the carriage, with Sister Gertrude, and Malcolm follows with the Parson. Carriage driven away. Miss Harrington, Mrs. Morton, Joe Morton, Marie Castleton depart. Mrs. Spangler, Bobby and the Bogie walk away leisurely. The Keyman stands like one carved from stone, looking after the departing ship.)

(The End.)



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